THE COMMONWEAL

A Weekly Review of Literature, The Arts, and Public Affairs.

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MR. HOOVER SOUTHBOUND

WHAT does Latin America mean to us of the sovereign north? Mr. Hoover is not a vacationist. He has traveled a great deal, but always with a purpose. And the point in the circumstance that his first official act as President-elect has been to board a steamer and go south is certainly this: the people of the United States cannot understand too soon or too well the significance of the vast domain of republics which begins where we stop and stretches on down to Magellan's outpost. There is, first of all, the important matter of trade. During several seasons canny Washingtonians have shrugged their shoulders when Europeans voiced a tired criticism of Uncle Sam, but each and every one of them jumped to attention when even a Chilean journalist dipped his pen in vitriol to upbraid the Yankee. American investments in Hispanic countries have doubled and redoubled, until complete loss of the staggering sums now extant would demolish Wall Street. The marts of commerce have taken on a new coloring since the war, United States firms having outdistanced European rivals. But not all is rosy in these financial relations. The British still prevail in banking circles, and the Germans have recovered a vast amount of territory since peace returned to them. Our greatest skill is needed to keep pace with growing demands and an increasingly complex industrial situation. We cannot lose out in South America, because prosperity depends to a not inconsiderable extent upon foreign trade.

This in turn is at least qualified by diplomatic happenings. The Monroe Doctrine is a great advantage, but may prove a handicap if suffered to remain vague and unmodern. Should the policy of intervention be maintained, or must it be discarded as unwarranted under present-day conditions? To what extent are United States citizens resident in South America entitled to full protection? Are modifications of the tariff schedules called for? More especially critical, however, is the status of recent Mexican activities. The skies of that unfortunate country are not brightening. No question is more grave than this: has Mr. Morrow failed, or will he carry the day with steady and sure advances? One believes that news that an increasing dissatisfaction with him is rife among large

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sections of the Mexican population can be accepted as bona fide. Is there a chance for a different kind of program? Such questions are being asked abroad with more and more insistence; and upon our reply to them the structure of our new interpretation of the Monroe Doctrine will largely depend.

Finally there remains the problem of effecting a closer identification of cultural and social forms. The old story of "democracy" as something for which both north and south have "suffered and died" is no longer effective. After all, democracy is a matter-of-fact business which neighbors can hardly make the topic of enthusiastic conversation. Other matters are much more to the point, and some are political. If there really is a sizable quantity of "Bolshevism" in countries of which Mexico is a sample, the antagonism to our own principles and practice is evident. And what shall we say of the many tangents to imperialism? Equally puzzling are all the details of cultural contact. Sundry thousands of addresses, for instance, have applauded the university as a means of bringing the Latin American closer to Boston. As a matter of fact that student, when he comes here, is the loneliest of mortals; and one doubts if he ever sees us as anything but an indescribable and tasteless social mass, as indifferent to everything he has to offer as the most imperious "Bible missionary" afoot in Colombia. Yes, Mr. Hoover has something to think about during his equatorial sojourn.

WEEK BY WEEK

THIS week The Commonweal appears slightly altered in its interior decorative scheme. The "long editorial" with which our magazine opened has been abandoned; and though we regret the passing of what, for us, had almost become an institution, in the writing of which many different persons took not a little pleasure, we feel there are several good reasons why the old order should give way to new. A number of other changes in format are planned, in the belief that typography lends itself to continuous and beneficial experiment. Naturally we remember the example of the old editor who refused to "monkey" with any detail of publication excepting the date line. But there are few old editors nowadays, and most of us are constantly learning.

THE recent Cincinnati convention of the National Council of Catholic Men pretty well resolved itself into a series of reflections upon the progress of the last campaign. Various speakers affirmed that there had been a frank and impressive display of religious intolerance, that the cause was ignorance rather than ill will, and that something ought to be done to dispel misunderstanding and absurd fears. The final resolution adopted had this to say: "We urge upon our affiliated organizations charity toward their accusers coupled, however, with systematic, intelligent and clear exposition by word of mouth, the printed word and radio, of our faith, of the character, teachings and history of the Church and the civil and religious allegiance of Catholics." It was of course obvious to the sponsors of this resolution that such a course of enlightenment depends to a considerable extent upon being able to get the scared and hopelessly prejudiced audience into a receptive frame of mind. Because he made this point quite forcibly—and, strangely enough, it is frequently overlooked—Senator Joseph E. Ransdell's address seemed to us particularly good. But many a crisp oration helped to make the convention interesting enough to stimulate those in attendance and to foster respect for the organization among those who did not go to Cincinnati.

IN ORDER to be great, a nation must have a great literature. In order to develop such a literature, it must encourage native writers. The finest sort of encouragement, indeed the only sort worth a whoop to a literary man, is financial. Something like this must have been the reasoning behind the complaint of Italian authors that their country is being overstocked with translations from foreign books, and their subsequent petition that a literary immigration act be passed which will allow only a quota of books by foreigners into Italy. Not to material things only is applied the Fascist notion of struggle between the nations; the head and the heart, the soul and the mind of a country are concerned as well. And because of this, it is necessary that books play their part in the rise of a bigger and better Italy. But taking at face value the authors' denial that their purpose is simply to increase their earning rate per word, we must conclude that they think rather well of their abilities. If they are sufficient unto themselves, if they are capable of playing the lone wolves in handling the literary aspect of Italy's renaissance, if they can limit the importation of books from other countries without doing an injury to their own, we bid them godspeed in their venture. But who could resist the last word that in erecting a tariff wall against books they might, just possibly, deny the right of entry to ideas?

THE embarrassment of press services dealing with oriental affairs is increasing day by day as the true significance of the "Mongol uprising" in Barga becomes plainer. Early in August despatches based largely on reports emanating from Japan described the revolt of Mongolian regiments which had torn up some rails and wrecked a train on the Chinese-Eastern railway. At the time the China Weekly Review poohpoohed the story, declaring that the wreck was merely the work of unorganized cutthroats "after loot like most bandits in China or Chicago." But in other quarters it was intimated that a "crisis" was at hand. The Japanese were reported as considering it "a matter of the gravest importance," nothing less, indeed, than a Bolshevik plot designed to throw north Man-

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churia into anarchy and communism. This so agitated the Soviet that Moscow reports describing the raid attributed its inspiration to Japanese and White Russians hoping to provide Japan with an excuse for sending troops into north Manchuria. Excitement was great in Tokio as in Moscow, but not in the Barga. The reason is plain now that investigations have shown the "revolt," the "uprising" and the "plot" to be simply the operations of robbers going about their ordinary business. It would be interesting to discover who was the newspaperman, Japanese or Russian, who first yielded to the temptation to magnify the yarn, and bring some action and glory into an otherwise dull and newsless day.

ANYONE who is more than remotely interested in China cannot afford to overlook Bulletin Number 5 of the Catholic University of Pekin. It is hard to place limits on our praise for this excellent publication. No allowances need be made for the fact that it is presumably created under difficulties which do not beset faculties in the west; page for page, it will stand comparison with anything of its kind produced in these more favored lands. Here, for the scholar, is a new translation into English of the Nestorian tablet of Hsi-An-Fu; here, in a more popular vein, are discussions of affairs, including China's relations with the west during the two thousand years preceding the birth of Christ, the careers of the Franciscan contemporaries of Marco Polo, and the recent entrance into the Benedictine order of Lu Cheng-Hsiang, former Prime Minister of China. The whole is so well illustrated that one is tempted to a rather free paraphrase of Izaak Walton: he that likes not the book should like the pictures that adorn it.

ALCEO and Alcide Dossena, poverty-stricken Cremonans, take rank with the greatest sculptors of the world upon the discovery of the most hilarious series of mistakes yet made by art connoisseurs. Not since the famous Hesperopithecus haroldcookii revelation have the experts been put to such complete and laughable rout. True, in this case their misappraisals are said to have entailed the expenditure of several million dollars for renaissance marbles which were carved in post-war Rome, yet this cannot be reckoned as a loss. Although not antique, the work of the Dossenas is of such excellence that it must possess monetary value of its own. Donatello, Pisano, Mino da Fiesole and other Tuscan masters may have supplied the inspiration of style, but to the Dossenas belong admiration and honor for conception and execution. "If the sarcophagus purchased by the Boston Museum of Fine Arts is not the work of Mino da Fiesole," say the art experts there, "the sculptor did himself an injustice, as to establish the sarcophagus as his own work would be to fix the sculptor's reputation beyond question." Alceo Dossena, dupe with his brother of unscrupulous art dealers of the eternal city, takes the curtain call. The world may be poorer for its loss of the works of renaissance sculptors, but it is equally enriched by the finding of two new geniuses.

FROM the Philippines comes this charming little fragment of a story to make us ask for more. It concerns a Jesuit brother who lives with a priest of the same order in one of the more remote island villages. The brother arrived at the mission seven years ago and since then, among other remarkable things, had developed an orange grove, made pineapples grow where there were none before, and built a house of wood where all other houses are of grass. An army officer seeing his work thought it a pity that the brother had not been called to a military life; a visiting physician could not but exclaim what an industrialist had been lost in him. To the priest he becomes "among the great men of my little life. He has a poet's heart, a giant's will, a faith like Peter's, and a love like John's." Names are not mentioned; even the village is left to conjecture, but here is enough to make us give ourselves to dreams. Where else can we find place to understand and grasp a man who has lost the sense of Time, perhaps of Space, even of Identity, and not despite this, it may be because of it, has found his work and happiness?

AT A time when all the world is learning how Mr. Haldemann-Julius managed to palm off millions of little blue books with the help of juicy titles and succulent ads, Germany is observing the centenary of Reklam, possibly its most famous publisher. During the fall of 1867 this enterprising bookman astonished everybody by issuing a complete Faust in brown paper covers for two Teutonic cents. The poverty-stricken —and also, no doubt, the frugal—gasped a little, but continued to watch for new numbers in what gradually became a "Universalbibliothek." At present there are many thousands of numbers, which include the best of German classical literature and a prodigal array of translations from other languages. In this series all sorts of literary specialties can likewise be found. There are, for instance, admirable commentaries on music, the equal of which American readers cannot obtain for more dollars than Reklam charges cents, and fascinating anthologies of poetry or philosophical prose. Needless to say, the beneficent effect upon German education and life is evident and universally recognized. The little brown books have been sold from news-stands, soda counters and the wagons of street vendors. Perhaps they are to a great extent responsible for that love of good literature which pervades even the hardest working and least intellectual groups of Germans. Is the Haldemann-Julius business a step toward a United States Reklam? Or has it merely ruined an opportunity? Well, one observes that in the vast accumulation that constituted Mr. Payne Whitney's fortune, there was just $250 worth of books—on sports.

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DURING life, Father Thomas Edward Shields turned every ounce of his energy over to the teaching sisters. He realized the problems which burdened them, the devotion of their hearts, the magnificent possibilities of their undertaking; and he set to work coordinating all these things intelligently, with rarely courteous insight. It is therefore fitting that his earthly remains should be given a place of rest near Sisters' College itself, at the Catholic University. "His vision," said the Reverend George Johnson in a fine eulogy, "was of a Catholic school system which would direct the children into the doing of the truth in charity." That his method sometimes ran counter to conventional pedagogy goes without saying. Father Shields was, indeed, a genuinely original and courageous man. But the gist of all he did may, it seems to us, be found in a simple formula. Accepting the real world—the actual child—precisely as it is, with the aid of science and observation, he tried to irrigate every bit of it with the flood of a higher radiance. Nothing in either pupil or teacher was to remain unchanged by the influence of Christ, so that even secular history or mathematics would conserve the character of a revelation. This meant having confidence both in humanity and in the educational system. Perhaps it was never wholly justified. But Father Shields would have answered, with a serious smile, that after all the point was to have faith in God.

STORMS in the North Atlantic delayed the shipment of cranberries to France and did much, thereby, to ruin the celebration of Thanksgiving by the American colony in Paris. But at home and in London the day was a great success. President Coolidge's little joke on pumpkin pie made it certain that this Thanksgiving Day will go down into history—what biographer will be strong enough to suppress it? And turkeys from his farm in Vermont must have given a precious flavor to the dinner of the American Society in London. The occasion called for some facetiousness on the part of Prime Minister Baldwin. "It was tobacco that planted the English nation in America. Virginia is the only country in the world that has had tobacco as its currency." But was he trying to smoke us, as the English say, when he suggested that any request to America for loans for armaments should receive the answer which Benjamin Franklin put into the mouth of the Quaker whose fellow during public worship tried to borrow money for the collection? Obviously he had found satisfaction of some kind in Mr. Coolidge's reference to loans for armaments two weeks before. But he was in a frolic mood. Do we detect no amusement at our own expense in that pat on the back, no satire in those English accents drawling "Atta boy"?

WRITING in the New York World, Mr. William McFee, author of Casuals of the Sea, and a marine engineer, makes some illuminating comments on "the code of the sea," which those bent on learning all the lessons of the Vestris disaster should well consider. Primarily he states that the code is not accurately comprehended by shore people who, "fed by romantic stories of heroism at sea," have distortingly idealized the conception of a seaman's duty. No better exemplification can be found, he asserts, than in the "Women and children first!" cry which is thrillingly dramatic but a "classic and conventional imbecility." There is undisputed justice in such a classification. Among the major horrors of the Vestris sinking was the fact that few women and children were saved. This happened not because "the code of the sea" was not strictly followed, but because it was. Mr. McFee merely crystallizes the sentiment of a thinking public when he labels as ridiculous the placing of a lot of women and children in a lifeboat with an inadequate adult male proportion and the launching of it first, when in the very nature of things the first launching must be something of an experiment. In carefully considered moments before a boat's departure, the assignment of places in lifeboats (a husband is always put with his wife and child) is determined, and surely the hour of disaster is no time for haphazard and fear-crazed change. What is true of men passengers is also true of the crew. Exact compliance with lifeboat instructions should produce the same order in leaving a doomed vessel as we now see exemplified in the case of burning buildings where fire drills have been carefully outlined and practised.

PUBLICATION of the Official Catholic Year Book, in which a committee of the hierarchy, the staff of the National Catholic Welfare Conference and P. J. Kenedy and Sons, publishers, have coöperated, is, at least, a notable statistical event. Even a hasty glance through the large volume indicates how extensive the life and work of the Catholic Church have grown to be. Here are a summary of events, a digest of important ecclesiastical pronouncements, a brief history of the Church, lists of prominent clergy and distinguished laymen, and accounts of major activities. Since the book is designed for conference use, no one is likely to sit down and read it through. Even so, relative familiarity with it ought to be expected of those who talk or write about the Church. It is steadily becoming more difficult to reconcile intelligence with blind opposition to Catholics, and this new publication will make it still harder. That some portions of the volume are opinion rather than fact it is, naturally enough, unnecessary to state.

FOR sixty-eight years Charles Terry has been a traveling salesman, and at ninety-two is still active on the road. In service as in age he is the oldest of his profession in the United States, and his presence as a guest of honor at a recent meeting of the National Traveling Salesmen's Foundation was a blessing to the newspapermen assigned to cover that event. Here

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was something like genuine copy on which to hang the launching of a campaign for a hospital and home. Considerable as was the publicity resulting, one is surprised to find that the subject of Mr. Terry's travels was not exhausted in the usual manner. How many times has he longed for a job which would not take him away from home? How often has he sworn that the life of a traveler is the only one? Which was the most interesting of the many products he has sold? How many million stories has he heard in train compartments; how often, in sixty-eight years, has he learned of the adventures of Pat and Mike, of the mistakes of the second-hand dealer, of the Scotchman only half interested in the principle of give and take, and the Englishman who couldn't see a joke? Does he remember the genesis of the Ford anecdotes? Can he recall when news butchers urged copies of Peck's Bad Boy on all the tired passengers? To what does he attribute his long and active life: early rising, daily dozens, abstention from alcohol or tobacco? And, if he were to begin again, would he be a traveling man? Curiously enough these are things to which in Mr. Terry's case the reporters seemed to pay no attention. Or perhaps in him they found the one man in a million who would refuse to answer questions based on a formula long and fearfully established.

A TOO little known work of Christian charity is that of the New York Foundling Hospital at Sixty-eighth Street and Lexington Avenue. Founded October 11, 1869, through the efforts of the late Sister Irene of the Sisters of Charity, it has for almost sixty years continued its good work in behalf of the unfortunate and outcast. Nor has its influence been confined to the metropolis, for boys and girls who owe their very lives to the sheltering arms of the Foundling Hospital have "made good" in every state of the Union and in many foreign countries. Besides caring for the nameless waifs who have been abandoned at the threshold of life's journey, and for the mother, the Hospital maintains a school and open-air hospital for the older children at Huguenot Park, Staten Island, and places in foster homes, either as borders or by adoption, hundreds of little ones every year. About 1,200 boys and girls are being thus cared for. In the case of boarding homes, trained workers make regular visits to counsel with the Boarding Mother on the problems connected with their wards and to report on conditions.

THE work of the Hospital has been approved by the American Association of Surgeons and other medical bodies, and its scientific equipment and standing are of the highest order. Many general hospitals, unable to give special courses in obstetrics and pediatrics, send their internes and nurses to the Foundling Hospital for this work and credit them with the time spent there as part of their regular training period. Owing to the rapidly mounting costs of operation and to the high requirements of modern and social work, the Hospital has for a number of years been running at a deficit of approximately $5,000 per month. The Sisters of Charity, true to their reliance upon Divine Providence for their sustenance, have been loath to advertise either their good works or their needs, but they are now faced with a crisis in their affairs which makes imperative their appealing to the generosity of the public to meet their daily expenses.

DOWN BY THE RIO GRANDE

WE CAN furnish one hundred proofs to show that Ambassador Morrow is successfully carrying out the Mexican policy of the administration. This policy, of course, has only two aims: first, to prevent a serious disturbance at all costs, and second, to acquire what is due on vast American loans. One can be attained by not demanding respect for any right to which an American is entitled; the second calls for watchful waiting, and plenty of it. The contours of the Mexican social scene have not changed by a hair's breadth during the long months of diplomatic effort. Notice for instance the address by Deputy Hernan Laborde in the Chamber on the subject of Mr. Hoover's trip. "I claim solidarity for Sandino," said this apostle of revolution, "who represents the possibility of unified struggle against the common enemy." To those who believe that Señor Laborde is singularly erratic compared with his countrymen, it may be suggested that he simply voiced one of the major convictions of the party which controls his country—a conviction which has been propagated by official school-books and civic catechisms. And if we listen to such talk after months of breakfasting with Calles, sending bouquets to cut-throats and abominable mistreatment of all aliens, it must mean that the Morrow drama has not yet got through the first act.

This implies no criticism of the Ambassador. He cheerfully set out to do what his government expected him to accomplish, and what, in turn, was the sovereign will of the majority. As a matter of fact we pity him. What must be the "inside story" with which his mind has been assailed—a tale, among other things, of murder, brutality and wholesale disregard for all legal and moral principles? He knows better than anyone else could the truth about the death of Obregon and the cringing of Calles. The brutality of the police he has been compelled to watch without raising so much as a finger. And what chivalric American, we wonder, would like to sit by and know the truth of what was done to Mother Concepcion after her farcical trial? Behind the smoke-screen of Mr. Morrow's forced smile the last possibility of open speech was silenced. Even El Excelsior was driven to the wall by a President whose bland platitudes were reëchoed, to our everlasting shame, even by the best newspapers of New York.

The whole country is cowed by the fire in the neighbor's house. Down in the small town of Hebronville,

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Texas, the district attorney of Laredo—Mr. John Valls—spoke out, in reply to an interview given to El Excelsior by Emilio Portes Gil. Referring to his last meeting with the present ruler of Mexico, Mr. Valls said: "The last time you saw me was when Mr. McDonald wanted to eject you from the Hamilton Hotel in this city, for having grossly insulted a chambermaid, and I interceded in your behalf and prevented an ugly scandal from attaching to your name." Again, Señor Gil's brother-in-law having been indicted for embezzlement of private funds and placed in jail, Mr. Valls "allowed the young man to refund the money and released him from further custody." These details are of minor consequence, but what fun it must be for Mr. Morrow to begin the day eating ham and eggs with such an illustrious fellow! And everybody knows more and more. The time has come to say: Mr. Hoover, when you return from your trip southward, minus all suspicion of being in the pay of the Catholic Church or of a military junta, tell us the truth and nothing but the truth!

ROOM IN THE INN

QUANTITATIVELY, at least, housing problems in the United States are veering toward a solution. Indeed the vast outlay for building has been an important factor in sustaining industrial activity and, with that, prosperity. We have not, of course, utilized architectural ingenuity in a manner at all comparable with the attractive art of (let us say) Holland's residential communities. Not a few of our suburbs are complete demonstrations of what bad taste can accomplish, and many an apartment house is a monstrous thing. Nevertheless the technical equipment of American houses has steadily improved, and there is no doubt that the average metropolitan child receives far more of fresh air and security than did the youngsters of a generation ago. A glance at the proposed New York Multiple Housing Bill indicates the carefulness with which the modern law-maker reckons with the difficulties of gregarious living. Here are stipulations that staircases must be fire-proof, that all kitchens must open to the outer air, and that a sizable quantity of yard will be looked for by inspectors.

All of this is most interesting. Who can doubt that the modern world thinks of building first of all in terms of health and hygienic convenience? Nobody is satisfied any longer with a quaint façade or a beautifully gabled roof if the bedrooms are sunless and the drains refuse to work. Very likely the conception of architecture is being revamped on the basis of these things, which are still so attractive to many home-seekers that a highly polished bathroom and a completely outfitted kitchen can render them utterly oblivious to cheap materials or ungainly lines. The illustrious Le Corbusier, one of the foremost living Parisian designers, does not hesitate to declare that even the city of the Seine must be reconstructed with a view to safeguarding the working population from disease and over-crowding, however little may be added to the aesthetic silhouette which entrances the receptive tourist.

Indeed, this new conception has engendered more than a relatively revolutionary attitude toward the social aspects of the housing problem. Vienna, we are told, has gone to work with something like sublime carelessness. The effort to restore housing equilibrium has produced many admirable results in the way of sanitation and low rents—but private industry has nearly disappeared from the building trade, and yet it is from private industry alone that the nation derives its revenue! How to correlate new and urgent social demands with individual leadership and financial stability is a question which all the world has settled down to answer. It seems to us that the practice of the United States is often less exemplary than it might be. Hand in hand with "prosperity" there has gone a notable loss of efficiency, which must some time be paid for and which is especially evident in home building. The amount of slovenly work yearly palmed off upon citizens having an urge to settle down beggars all description. And yet there is no community we know of which places at the service of everybody the advice of a competent public inspector whose task it is to see, not that all the laws have been complied with, but that a fair price is being charged for honest work.

The United States has nevertheless accomplished so much that its practice has been followed rather widely by other countries. Only recently we were stirred by the announcement that Germany was thinking of turning over its residential development program to American engineers. French manufacturers then adopted the American method of constructing homes for their employees. Now comes the news of the Loucheur law, which in many ways constitutes a remarkable advance. M. Loucheur, Minister of Finance, has elaborated a plan which calls for extensive coöperation between home-seekers and the government. If the hope of building nearly three hundred thousand houses of two varieties by 1933 is to be realized, a dozen million francs will be required. The sum is not, of course, to be included in the budget, but will be raised by floating bond issues. This implies several distinct advantages for the purchaser: he need pay only a small sum down, the total of which is graduated according to the number of children belonging to the household; the rate of interest has been lowered, so that poorer citizens will be paying only 2 percent on their investments; and there are other "subventions" which allow for special needs and emergencies. Although the measure has not yet been tested by practice, its details have been thought out so carefully and its safeguards are so much in conformity with sound experience that it really seems a model for this kind of legislation.

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As will have been observed, Loucheur has reckoned with one of the special social needs of his country—family readjustment. France must check decrease in population or fall to the level of a minor nation. But how, it has often been asked, can families thrive in overcrowded and unsanitary quarters? The new law not only meets this question but, by offering substantial monetary compensation for the burden of rearing children, effects a very important change in the social outlook. Of course, as someone has said, a house itself will not change a heart. But undoubtedly the house is, after all, a most significant factor. Who can doubt that how we build is to a considerable extent the index of how we intend to live?

ALAS, THE STAGE!

TWENTY-FIVE hundred years old and still an adolescent. That is the curious career of the drama, which never had a more worried corps of bedside angels than today, a nursing staff concerned almost exclusively with its future, its health, its habits, its morals, the formation of its character. It is not an adult institution and never will be. Let those who demand to know about its future be answered that its future will be what its past has been: constantly changing, settling down only for deceiving moments, never growing up. This is what we must bear in mind in any attempt to diagnose the ailments of the stage. It is what Corneille was thinking of when he said that the drama's pains are usually growing pains. At other times they are the wages of sins which this fey child can never learn to avoid: rifling the jam pots, sifting the garbage can, stealing into the tempting orchard of Herr von Kotzebue across the way. The last, apparently, is the chief cause of its present distress: it has been eating to surfeit again the green and shining apples of melodrama.

And here we join forces with the numerous gentlemen who are haggard over the truly low state of the theatre. Aesthetically, commercially, any other way, it is on its bottoms. Let us swell the weeping chorus; let us wail and gnash our teeth. Let us denounce the crime reporter turned dramatist, and the playwright adopting the technique of the police blotter. Let us say with M. Edouard Bourdet, in the Theatre Arts Monthly: "The theatre will always be beaten when it challenges the cinema on its own ground." Let us understand, with him, that "we must abandon an unequal contest and begin by eliminating all plays in which action is the dominating factor, plays in which dialogue is merely explanatory and replaceable by gestures and attitudes. For one thing, melodrama." Let us be faint with Mr. Kenneth MacGowan, in Harper's, and suppose that worthwhile plays will not be produced in New York until economic conditions are other than they are.

Here also let us join with the less numerous and possibly more select of the drama's trustees: those who find fault with the heavy doses of home remedies, the herb teas, laxatives and mustard plasters being administered in a hearty resolve to restore health to the patient. Enter Miss Florence Nash, who recently advised the Church and Drama Association never to recommend a dull play simply because it is a virtuous one. Miss Nash's very reasonable fear was that non-churchgoers in the audience might unreasonably connect virtue with dullness and religion with triteness. She may have had in mind Mr. Walter Hampden's production of The Light of Asia, a very moral production and a very dull one except for the moment when Vice enters, bewitchingly impersonated by a dozen of the temptresses schooled by Ruth St. Denis. Or Mr. Moneypenny, also a virtuous play, but one which becomes most interesting when it depicts life in a night club.

And here, finally, let us throw in our fortunes with those who are sure that it is not well to recommend a dull play simply because it is naughty. To what associations they belong we are not sure, but we hail them wherever they may be, and submit our greetings. Mr. O'Neill's Strange Interlude which, like the wounded snake, drags its slow length along far, far past the point of interest, is only the most famous case in point. Mr. Somerset Maugham's The Letter, which opens with gun play, is more typical only because it is shorter and its philandering heroine is unlucky enough to be caught.

We withdraw from the various clinics only when they begin to prescribe. Here we have nothing to offer except the possibly consoling thought that as long as there are nurses and attendants and angels like ourselves interested enough in the drama to deplore its state, it will live on like any healthy adolescent. Things must have seemed bad enough even in the latter days of Elizabeth. True, Mr. Shakespeare was handy with a new offering once or twice a year; Mr. Jonson could be relied upon to hit it off now and then, and Edward the Second could be revived. But one could not limit his attendance at the theatre to half a dozen nights in the season. Some comfort there is in recalling this, and in the certainty that virtue has been made trite, and vice dull, before, and both have been sweetened altogether too much at other times. But after Mr. Steele and Mr. Cumberland we had Messrs. Goldsmith and Sheridan, after Lord Bulwer-Lytton came Mr. Tom Robertson and Sir Arthur Wing Pinero.

Presently the drama will recover and, in the immediate memory of its hurts, conduct itself properly for a while. And there will be rejoicing in the land, for never was a more engaging youngster when on his good behavior. Meanwhile, who will not declare with the ubiquitous Mr. Channing Pollock: "I still feel that the great thrill in life is not to see one gangster shoot another over a girl in the bedroom scene, but to hear Maude Adams repeat the hymn to the dawn in Chantecler"?

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SHALL AUSTRIA TURN NORTHWARD?

By FRIEDRICH VON MINKUS

THE population of pre-war Austria was roughly 35 percent German, or at least of German mentality and language. The other 65 percent was composed of nine other nationalities, of whom the Czechs, including the Slovaks with their 22 percent, were the most numerous. The Germans were therefore in a relative but not in an absolute majority. For a long time they held the leading position in the state, thanks not only to their earlier cultural and economic development but also to the fact that the German-speaking provinces were the rallying point of this many-nationed state. For over five hundred years they had been the leading power in the union of German nations and were so still, alongside of Prussia, in the later union between these countries, so that the Germans of Austria were, and had always been, the pillars of Austria's ascendency abroad.

This situation was changed when Bismarck, through the campaign of 1866, severed the bond between Germany and Austria, in order to bring the former country under the undisputed leadership of Prussia with its north German influence. In this way he prepared the foundation of the Prussian-German empire which was established five years later, after the defeat of France. Under the pressure of defeat Austria became the dual state of Austria-Hungary, of which the Austrian half was a constitutional, many-nationed state, with legally guaranteed, equal rights for all its nations.

Bismarck, with his statesman's eye, had foreseen this shifting of the balance of power in Austria, but he had had no intention of inciting the Germans of Austria to fall away from their country, the less so as a considerable increase in the number of Catholics for the German empire would have been most unwelcome to him. He needed Austria for his policy of the balance of power in Europe. The maxim, "If Austria had not existed, it would have had to be created," came from him. In his construction, the inviolability of the Danube monarchy formed a diplomatic and cultural rampart to prevent the complications of the Balkans from reaching the frontiers of Germany. Shortly afterward he formed a permanent dual alliance between Germany and Austria and later a triple alliance by including Italy, which, after Prussia, was Austria's second mortal enemy.

Thus the Germans of Austria were to form the state-supporting element without calling forth centrifugal tendencies in the other nations by their noticeable preponderance, more particularly without driving the (ethnically very different) Slav races of Austria into the arms of the pan-Slav idea which emanated from Russia. By this conception of the Austrian problem, from a general European standpoint certainly the best at that time, a multitude of ten million people were given a diplomatic task which needed much political wisdom and coolly thought-out moderation and tact; even a greater apparatus of trained diplomatic experts would perhaps have broken down. The typical Austrian—only German Austrians called themselves simply "Austrians"; the others called themselves Czechs, Poles, Ruthenians, Slovakians and so on—would have been up to this task. His lovable, easy-going, gay and unselfish character qualified him for this hidden office as mediator between state and nation, but above all a certain well-bred cleverness which the world-centre of the Hapsburg imperial court had taught him, and the psychological and pedagogical routine which he has acquired in centuries of close contact with the most varied races of different degrees of culture.

But the area throughout which these typical Austrians were to be found was a much smaller one than was supposed, and in the failure to recognize this lay one of the chief causes of the Austrian tragedy. This area included fundamentally only Vienna and the immediate neighborhood which was under its influence. It was limited to certain higher circles of society, such as the military and official circles, which were largely mixed with assimilated members of other races, the upper clergy, who saw in the brotherhood of nations a Catholic idea, and a great number of Jews who, on a groundwork of German culture had risen intellectually, socially and politico-economically, and who had got over the ticklish question of their nationality by acknowledging themselves Austrians. All these people knew what living with the other nations was like from the metropolis of Vienna, and from the pedestal of their higher social or professional positions.

But the atmosphere among the German middle classes of Austria was different. They lived in the provinces under rougher conditions and in constant friction with the other peoples, particularly in Bohemia, where the rapid cultural rise of the Czech majority forced the Germans into violent opposition. There arose an irreconcilable German-national or pan-German party which centered in the most extreme Teutonism. They fought against Catholicism in the "away from Rome" movement; against liberalism with anti-Semitism, because they said it was vitiated by Jews; and against the Austrian state idea, calling it forced community with "inferior" races, under the—from the standpoint of Austrian law, highly treasonable—catchword "Union with Germany."

This defection was more painful and more alarming for the dynasty and the government than the revolt of other nations would have been; for it emanated from the hitherto most faithful nation, drove the

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others to similar desires, and was more serious than the fantastic pan-Slav idea on account of its territorial feasibility. But fortunately Germany, acting up to the Bismarck policy, maintained an absolutely rejective attitude. The fanaticism of the pan-German party failed; they even went so far as to start a farcical Woden cult in reference to the heathen religion of the old Germanic people; but the great mass of the people were more interested in the economic and social questions of the day. Only the anti-clericalism caught on in Socialist circles, and the anti-Semitism among the Christian Socialists.

Nevertheless, the national radicalism of the pan-German party, which had started in Bohemia, found its way into those circles of the Austrian Alpine provinces whose members, thanks to their superior education, were interested in the problem of races, and on the other hand into those circles whose members belonged to climatically and socially rougher surroundings, and who rejected with horror the more adaptable and well-bred manners of the Viennese as effeminate and characterless. Particularly the student world of the Alpine provinces enthusiastically took up the Pan-German idea, and put it into practice in strictly military duels and drinking customs after the German pattern.

From this reservoir more and more of the German-national spirit penetrated to the hitherto conservative, Austrian-thinking officers and officialdom. The lower clergy also began to feel the spirit of German nationalism, and Semitic adaptability made it possible for Jews to take up this idea. Only a small number of them responded to the German-national and Christian-Socialistic anti-Semitism with the ideal of Zionistic nationalism.

In the meantime those circles of the Austrian Germans who did not identify themselves with the pan-German movement, for instance the Christian Socialists and especially the liberals, had become culturally more closely connected with the German empire, which was not hindered in its development by national difficulties. The many regulations necessarily common to both empires during the great war led automatically to plans for the close economic union of both countries after the hoped-for victory. But even early in the war the widely-read work, Central Europe, by Friedrich Naumann, went far beyond the spheres of economics and culture to close constitutional convergence.

Among the old Austrians, whose ranks were growing ever thinner, this propaganda roused the greater dread of a Prussification which would overthrow the hyper-national character of Austria and the specific spirit of German Austria, because numerous causes in the great war brought new recruits to the ranks of German nationalism: the viewpoint that only "Nibelungen faith" had made the German empire fight shoulder to shoulder with the Danube monarchy; the version—most unfortunate in the face of the other nations of Austria—that the war was a "German war against the Slavs and the neo-Latin nations"; the overrating of the German and the underrating of the Austrian leaders and their successes, encouraged by the German commanding officers and helped by the typically Austrian habit—winning but dangerous—of looking at other people's good deeds through a magnifying-glass and their own through a diminishing-glass; the better equipment and provisioning of the German army, made possible by the more advantageous parliamentary and economic conditions, which captivated even anti-military, Social-Democratic classes; the Emperor Charles's efforts toward peace, which Germany called treason, and the sympathy for hostile Italy absurdly ascribed to the Empress Zita; lastly, the long-prepared desertion of the non-German troops from the cause of Austria, which placed the last German picked troops in a terrible position and brought about the loss of the cause.

At the downfall of the monarchy the "National Assembly" was formed out of the remains of the former Austrian parliament. These representatives, when the lamentable German remnant of Austria was revolutionized by Bolshevistic agitation, proved surprisingly unanimous on one point: the first constitution of the new republic of German-Austria, created, so to speak, overnight by the Christian Socialists, the Social Democrats and the German nationalists, proclaimed, to a certain degree, a negative end in view for the state: union with the republic of Germany. Wilson's Fourteen Points put the dictated peace conditions of Versailles and St. Germain on a nationalistic basis.

The strong aversion to the idea of a state comprised of many nations, which led to the destruction of Austria, went so far that, where the geographical conditions did not allow of the placing of the frontiers of the states where one race ended and another began, such as Czecho-Slovakia, new Roumania and the south Tyrol, they pressed considerable minorities of one nationality, without the possibility of adequate protection, into the kingdom of quite another nationality, with a result exactly contrary to the zealous desire for order and emancipation which had been shown, and so, instead of the coördination of the many-nationed state, they created the subordination of one nation under another.

To be logical then, just as the Austrian Italians were incorporated with Italy, the Austrian Roumanians with Roumania, the Austrian south Slavs with Jugoslavia, the whole mass of the Austrian Germans ought to have been incorporated with the German empire. Instead of which, the nationalistic principle was broken through and the comprehensible veto which France put on the strengthening of her vanquished German neighbors demanded the existence of the Austrian Germans as an independent state, analogous to the Austrian Czechs and the Hungarians. This was nationally a perfectly inconclusive analogy, because no state speaking the same language offered

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the possibility of union to these isolated nations; but also from a politico-economical standpoint the analogy was false, because Bohemia and Hungary represented far more harmonious economic territories, in consequence of their former tendency toward independence, than the German-Austrians Alpine districts, which by their orographic formation were agriculturally at a disadvantage, and which for hundreds of years had been the centre of the state of many nations, the heart in the body, but not the body itself, nor its own end and aim. And so occurred the only case known to history, not even heard of at the time of the Napoleonic improvisation of states, in which a state at the moment of its forced birth declared its lack of will to exist, and looked upon itself as a future part of another state.

Within the narrow limits of a general discussion it is scarcely possible to touch on the question, discussed but not solved by numerous experts, as to whether the union—federative, of course—of Austria and Germany would be an economic advantage for the former or not. Narrowed down, it is a question—certainly capable of adjustment—of Austria's being either elevated or swallowed up (and opposed to this alternative is the hopeless fact that Austrian economics couldn't be worse than they are now, anyhow). And the same thing can be said of the effect of a possible union on home and foreign politics: would the German foreign policy insure a better development to Austria than her own independent policy would? And as regards home politics: which of the two great parties in Austria would receive more support through the union with Germany, the burgher, i. e., middle-class party, or the Social-Democratic, of which latter party the strong left wing is almost more in touch with the Communists of Germany than with her more moderate Social-Democrats? Questions which just now, since the new elections in Germany, could scarcely be conclusively answered.

Finally, the academically equally difficult question to solve: How would the union of the more than 95 percent of Catholics among the sixty-six million Austrians with the 35 percent of Catholics among the sixty-three million Germans react on the religious welfare of both groups? This question is closely connected in the psychology of the people with the question of the mental communion among all Germans; for the dissension through the Reformation was the eloquent confessional expression of deep-lying ethnical discord in the souls of the German people—north as opposed to south Germans—increased in the contrast between Prussianism and Austrianism, a contrast sufficiently equalized in their common culture but considerably stronger between one person and another than the outsider would suppose.

But with this question the problem is lifted from the level of what is, after all, still a material and personal idea, the welfare of the people, and rises to the higher plane of the purely ideal, impersonal idea, the salvation of the people, salvation in the religious sense. In contrast to the heathen of old, the Christian has long ago accustomed himself to the fact that, according to the laws of his moral code, the salvation of man lies in reconciling the instinct of self-preservation sanctified in the Fifth Commandment with the love of God and one's neighbor. He will have to begin to accustom himself also to the mathematically logical conclusion that the sum of individuals pledged to altruism cannot, as a nation, be justified in absolute selfishness. The universal principle of the kingdom of Christ expressed in the Saviour's command, "Go out and teach all nations," the nation-binding grace of Pentecost which was to take away the curse of Babylon that had confused the races, must make it clear to the Catholic that "Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's and to God the things that are God's" cannot be made the excuse for dividing human aims into two opposing parts, one political and one ethical; that, on the contrary, "love God above all and thy neighbor as thyself" holds good for nations as well as for individuals.

In the poly-national microcosm of central Europe, old Austria has been the modest and rather weedy little nursery-garden for the reconciliation of nations. Joyfully united by the threefold indestructible tie of faith, hope and charity, which instead of a chain of dry paragraphs would perhaps at last have woven itself gradually round the different races of Austria, in spite of all mistakes and disputes, they would have said to one another: "Behold, brethren in Christ and in Austria, like you, I am also a chosen emissary of a great nation, sent out to the glory of God and the happiness of the nations to exchange and compare with you our separate abilities, our separate knowledge, our different characters and temperaments, the teachings of our separate histories and the achievements of our separate cultures, and thus to cherish and rear the delicate little seedling, up to now misunderstood and abused, till it grows to be the plant of central European, possibly of pan-European, perchance in the distant future, of world, communion of nations in the spirit of the Redeemer."

Perhaps Providence will one day need the prepared soil of that microcosmic nursery-garden of the bond of nations which was Austria. Many persons in Austria today hold to this tremulous thought, to this shyly alluring hope, when they anxiously face the question of the union with Germany, and perhaps one or the other in the neighboring "succession-states" does so too—(dreamers, the practical politicians would call them at best); an Austria with a free hand might again become the point of crystallization, negotiator between north and south, east and west. An Austria bound to a one-nation state could not do so! And so these visionaries hope for an ever closer economic and cultural union with the German brother-country and for the continued existence of Austria, with her possibly higher vocation, as an independent state.

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SETTING ONE'S HOUSE IN ORDER

By THOMAS J. MALONE

ALTHOUGH the desirability of a will to dispose of certain kinds of property after death is everywhere conceded, additional measures are growing in favor that serve family welfare by removing designated assets from one's bequeathable estate. These measures obviate, as regards the assets covered, the inconvenience, delay and expense of probate, as well as perversion or loss through a faulty will. Such measures even preclude, in many cases, any necessity of a will at all.

A judge of a probate court, of long experience, recently told me:

> While every person should make careful provision for the disposal of his property and the welfare of dependents after his death, it by no means follows that such provision calls, in every case, for making a will. There are better ways, in fact, for disposing of the more common kinds of property in the circumstances that obtain with the average man and the average woman.
>
> In my opinion, too much emphasis is being placed today on a will as the only, or always the best, method of assuring wise disposal of property after death. As a matter of blunt truth, much of this emphasis is through propaganda by concerns that profit by having people make wills.

I asked a lawyer about this, one experienced in drawing wills and advising on estate disposition. He said that many a man owning property did not need to make a will, his assets and his purposes regarding them being of such nature as to make the same ends attainable by simpler means and with certain positive advantages. He amplified his views to apply to the general run of folk:

> A will has to be submitted to probate, a procedure requiring from six months to a year, and more if there is litigation. Probate entails expenses, which the estate must pay, such as court costs, attorney's fees and costs of incidentals. There may be taxes against the estate. Probate may cause delay in acquiring possession, tying up funds for a time during which the heirs may be inconvenienced, may even suffer.
>
> Financial obligations incident to a death confront the average family bereft of its head; often the family is not in the best shape to meet them promptly. Bills come in—the physician's, the druggist's, the undertaker's, the grocer's, the what-not's. Also, the family needs to be tided over a period of financial readjustment. Immediacy of availability of cash is important. It must have money, and disposition under a will may defer availability of money to embarrassing lengths. On the other hand, it should not receive too much money all of a sudden. That should be seen to, as well.

When I reviewed the lawyer's points with the probate judge, he agreed to all of them.

> A man does well to seek legal advice on his particular estate problem. [he commented.] He should have a lawyer draw his will if one is to be drawn. But the conscientious and informed lawyer will advise a client when a will seems unnecessary, or when certain, if not all, of his holdings may be disposed of more wisely in ways other than by a will.

In his talk on arranging for disposal of one's worldly affairs without a will, the lawyer dealt largely with the case of the average man. He meant the husband and father, the provider, representative of that vast body of men with assets between a few hundred dollars and up to, say, $25,000 or even $50,000.

This excluded the man of larger means, who may leave assets greatly diversified in character, including varied business interests; mortgages, stocks and bonds; unfinished contracts, options, patents and other rights; and real estate in various places within and outside his state. That kind of man doubtless needs to make a will. Our average man is not in his class at all. Here he is—Henry Peters, of middle age or older, with a wife and growing children. He is a salaried or a professional man, or he owns a small business. His assets are largely, if not wholly, fixed and readily transferable. They comprise only a few kinds: a homestead, a few hundred dollars in bank and one or more life insurance policies. Whatever other forms of property he may have, these three represent the most common and the major ones. We'll not consider his much-used automobile. Suppose his homestead is worth $6,000, and is clear. Put his cash in bank at $500. He has three insurance policies, one for $5,000, one for $3,000 and one for $2,000. Multiply these figures by two, and the argument will still hold.

With this average man the welfare of his immediate family is the main, often the only, concern. Wives, children, parents, sisters and brothers—in that group are the ones to share in his holdings. Experience discloses that parents such as he, with dependent children, generally want all their property to go to the surviving spouse to be used for the entire family, as against splitting it up.

Henry Peters can prove himself a thoughtful and provident planner by taking certain steps that will permit immediate use by his family of his cash in hand, after his passing. Let him carry his bank deposit, commercial or savings—even both, if he has the two—as a joint account of himself and wife. Such an account will be entered in the bank records and the passbook as payable to "Henry Peters or Anna Peters, either of the survivor." The wording means that either may draw independently of the other and that, in case of the death of either, the deposit is payable to the survivor.

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Contrary to a wide-spread belief, a widow cannot draw at once on moneys held in a bank in the name of her dead husband solely. To draw on such moneys at all, she must have court sanction whether he leaves a will or does not leave a will. It may take some time to get a court order. If there is a will, its terms may or may not empower her to use all the deposit; if there is no will, she may use only a part of such a sole account, as other parts will go to the children under statute. But money in a joint account belongs to the survivor, fully, irrevocably, immediately, without probate procedure.

Life insurance proceeds will be taken up in a minute, but, first, how about the homestead? Henry has always considered it as belonging as much to his wife as to himself. Let him make sure that it will become hers, wholly, in case of his prior death, by covering it with a deed vesting ownership in himself and his wife, in "joint tenancy." That is a legal phrase whereby, on the death of either of the parties named as joint tenants, ownership vests automatically and without any ado entirely in the survivor. And ownership of that survivor is not restricted to a life estate or in any other way.

As to insurance. If a life insurance policy names the "estate" as beneficiary, proceeds on the death of the insured will go into the aggregate of holdings to be apportioned under the terms of a will, if any, or under the statutes if the insured died intestate. Such proceeds will be subject to taxation along with any other property in the estate. But if the policy designates a personal beneficiary or beneficiaries, that is, one or more persons by name—as wife, child or children, mother, and so on—the proceeds will be paid directly to the person or persons so named, and in the manner prescribed in the policy by the insured. They will be available, according to this prescription, immediately on proof of death and they will not be taxable.

Life insurance policies often provide for payment of the proceeds in a lump sum or in periodic installments, monthly, annually or otherwise, as the insured may have directed. Because of the frequent dissipation of life insurance proceeds by beneficiaries, in unwise investments, much can be said for providing by a will for their handling by a corporate body, under state regulation, in the interest of the heirs—creating of a so-called "insurance trust." But a like end may be attained, and without any expense for administering, by the simple resort of the insured in prescribing in the policy itself, when such an option is offered, that payment shall be made, instead of in a lump sum, in installments, either through a specified period or throughout the life of the beneficiary.

It may be well for a man to carry a policy payable in a lump sum to a personal beneficiary, to care for immediate expenses after his death—this especially if his cash holdings have a habit of running pretty low. Or, if there is a mortgage on the homestead—say, of $2,000 to $5,000, or more—he would do well to carry a policy of an amount sufficient to pay off that mortgage, the amount to be payable in lump.

What has been said as pertaining to the male head of a family is applicable, in principle, to a single man or a widower, and to a woman, whether maid, wife or widow. And in place of a spouse, one may substitute any other relative or person upon whom it is desired to confer property.

These methods contemplate, of course, no evasion of payment of any taxes justly imposable on an estate. In fact, inheritance or transfer tax laws in most of the states provide for taxation of property transferred in contemplation of death, or whose possession or enjoyment at or after such death is provided for in any instrument, whether "will, deed, grant, bargain, sale or gift."

It all boils down to this: the average man or woman may well consider arranging for the disposition of property and the welfare of others after death by certain measures that either preclude all necessity of a will or, if a will seems advisable for other interests involved, remove the stated assets from inclusion in that document. These measures are:

First: Having all bank deposits held in joint accounts with full ownership to the survivor.

Second: Having title to the homestead vested in self and spouse, or other relative, in "joint tenancy."

Third: Designating a personal beneficiary in life insurance policies and, in many cases, restricting payment of proceeds to periodic installments.

Such provision saves expense, makes possession immediate, averts inconvenience of court procedure and of estate administration—as regards assets so disposed of—and conserves insurance moneys. It may prevent litigation and consequent depletion or even total loss of the estate, for experience is said to have revealed that about 60 percent of wills drawn by lawyers are faulty and so open to attack, while the percentage of faulty wills drawn by laymen is still higher.

Protest Imperative

Just what would it profit us, were I the oak? You, being the wind,
Would buffet me, torture and shatter me, helpless to bend me to mood of your mind.

Or were I the pine tree, subduing to music your vagrant unrest,
You, wind-wise, would slip the wide noose of my arms, the intricate snare of my breast.

And let us not speak of the grass, prostrate to be trampled by you,
Scarce lifting its head as you pass to look after the feet it can never pursue.

Leave off being the wind! I, your lover, have no taste for these:
The prostrate abjection of grass, the futile, the impotent power of trees.

SISTER M. MADELEVA.

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AGAINST SPIRITUAL IMPERIALISM

By WILLIAM FRANKLIN SANDS

L'ESPRIT INTERNATIONAL for October carries an illuminating exposition of the missionary policy of the Vatican which has not received as much attention from The Commonweal as it deserves, although it has been discussed with intense interest in Asia as well as in Europe during the whole process of its latest development. The author, M. Maurice Pernot, bases it upon a study of The Missions and China, which appeared in the same magazine in July of this year from the pen of that brilliant Japanese writer on subjects of international interest, K. K. Kawakami.

Mr. Kawakami notes that China today is hostile not only to "political and economic imperialism" but to "spiritual imperialism" as well; and indeed, that observation is but a truism to any observer of the far East any time these past thirty years. When the present writer lived in Japan in 1896, the question of the Doshisha was the most agitating one in mission circles: the decision of Japanese to take over an institution founded, developed and supported by an American group, and to run it henceforth upon their own concept of the meaning of the spiritual message of that group.

At one time the question of native hierarchy and clergy in India divided Catholic missionary bodies into camps so vehement in their opinion that they might, without exaggeration, be called mutually hostile. There is an anecdote current in Europe which may well be apocryphal but which nevertheless expresses very precisely the Vatican policy. It is said that when both sides to the controversy had presented their arguments to the Holy Father, he remarked: "I wonder how they think the Church ever began to spread without a native clergy. We should still all be Jews." Se non é vero . . . .

There has been (and it may be said without disparagement to the earnestness and sincerity of missionaries, Catholic and Protestant) both a strong nationalistic tendency among them and a disposition to look upon the "native" as not safe to be entrusted with sacerdotal duties: a conviction that it is best, for some indefinitely long time, to hold "native" Christians in a firm but benevolent tutelage. Among innumerable illustrations of that tendency, one which is sufficiently remote to wound nobody's susceptibilities is to be found in the urgent recommendation to the Crown of Spain by the first civilian viceroy of Mexico, that the remnants of the "native" (Aztec, etc.) nobility be trained to the priesthood. The viceroy expatiated at length upon their high character and predisposition to western learning, in which "they excel their fellow pupils of Spain, and often advance quickly beyond the capacity of their teachers," noting also the honor and prestige in which these young men were held among the native Mexicans of lower caste. The viceroy left on record in his recommendations or "instructions" to his successors, his firm persuasion that to be successful the Church in Mexico must be based upon a native clergy and hierarchy.

There has been always a source of surprise to the present writer, wherever he has known missionary activities in Asia, in a disposition on the part of Catholic missionaries to emphasize the "heathen native" as "languishing in the chains of Satan," when there are innumerable points of sympathetic contact between Christianity and the philosophies and ethical systems of the East which would provide a firm and safe basis for discussion of divergences. For the purposes of the conversion it would seem appropriate to gather first all points of agreement and to isolate the others for further discussion.

Into this general situation also enters the fact that, because of the political aspirations of western nations in Asia during the past fifty to sixty years, affiliation of a "native" to a Christian communion all too often bore the aspect of adhesion to a "foreign" political party, a circumstance which bears analogy to a phenomenon not unknown even in the United States.

Mission or church property, and exemptions from the operation of the law in favor of missionaries, even disregard of certain laws in the fervor of their missionary zeal, have all added to a situation which became acute with the world war. The rise of Bolshevism and the enthusiastic acceptance of certain phases of Bolshevist philosophy by Asiatic and African peoples; the combination of the xenophobia developed in many of these countries by a quite natural process and stimulated from Moscow, with growing native nationalism —brought about the situation described so ably by Mr. Kawakami. It may be said, in passing, that the isolated position of foreigners (including missionaries) in China is a new thing. Christian European contacts with China are very ancient. In the early middle-ages a western European was little, if any, more "foreign" in China than an Icelandic Christian might have been in Rome. Once the obstacle of language had been overcome, there was no greater difficulty of contact by reason of food, clothes, customs and ways of living, and the European found none in subjecting himself, as a matter of course, to Chinese law, which did not differ greatly from that of his own people, and in identifying himself with his surroundings as he would anywhere in Europe. Isolation of groups of foreigners, living in China under their own national laws and according to their own national customs, is a new thing.

Pontifex Maximus seems a peculiarly appropriate title for the present Pontiff, for, very familiar with

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the working of Bolshevism and its effects, very observant of the development of the new nationalism, he has thrown a bridge across the growing chasm. M. Pernot, in his article, The Missionary Policy of the Catholic Church, points out that in 1922 Propaganda called together seven episcopal conferences, in seven of the great cities of China, each apostolic vicar or prefect being accompanied by two consultors, one Chinese and one foreigner. Out of these conferences arose seven programs for the constitution of a national Chinese Church. A papal delegate was then sent to the government of China, after which commissions were formed of the Chinese and foreign clergy to prepare the first national Chinese plenary council.

This council opened at Shanghai, May 15, 1924, and in it was represented all China "from Manchuria to Tonkin; from the steppes of Mongolia and the mountains of Tibet, to the coast lands of the Pacific."

In the Encyclical of February 28, 1926 (Rerum Ecclesiae Gestarum) the Pope points out that:

> The earliest monuments of Christian antiquity evidence to us that the clergy placed by the Apostles at the head of each new community of the faithful were not brought in from outside, but chosen among the natives of the place.

Further, the Pope took occasion to remind missionary societies that Propaganda does not give a spiritual government to any group or society as an exclusive and perpetual right, but that it is always revocable, and may be changed or replaced. A further letter addressed under date of June 15, 1926, to the apostolic vicars and prefects of China, observes:

> The Church would show better results . . . if it did not strike constantly against the wide-spread and growing prejudice in China which accuses the Catholic Church and its missionaries (instead of attending to their purely religious and spiritual duties) of pursuing political designs to the advantage of foreign nations and consequently, to the detriment of Chinese independence. But even if the sad vicissitudes of human politics have seemed at times to justify this opinion, the name alone of the universal Catholic Church is sufficient to prove that the Church extends to *all* peoples and that for her, differences of race among men do not exist, since all are brothers and sons of the same Father.

Having thus prepared the ground, Pius XI called six members of the Chinese clergy to Rome and in the basilica of Saint Peter, with great ceremony, he consecrated them with his own hands on October 28, 1926, following this ceremony by another in November, 1927, in which he consecrated with high honors Monsignor Hayasaka Bishop of Nagasaki, which diocese he separated from the French missions.

On August 3, 1928, taking the occasion of a truce between the parties to China's civil war, the Pope addressed another letter through his "venerable brothers and most reverend ordinaries of China" to "the whole great and very noble Chinese nation." In this letter he thanks the Most High for the end of the civil war, expresses the wish for a lasting and productive peace, based upon charity and justice, and, in order that this peace may be established, he hopes that

> full recognition will be given to the legitimate aspirations of this great and ancient people . . . who, if the ways of justice and order be maintained, may be sure of a great future.

In this letter the Pope calls attention again to the fact that the Catholic Church teaches and preaches respect and obedience to legitimately constituted authority, and demands for its missionaries and its faithful liberty and the guarantees of the common law.

ADAPTING GORDON CRAIG

By LILIAN GIBSON

IT HAS for many years been the loudly proclaimed opinion of Edward Gordon Craig that were spiritual values as severely criticized by men as are moral and material values, the modern theatre would long ago have been proscribed as a public calamity and a public danger; because artistic principles, as revealed truth, cannot find a place there as long as they are made subservient to economic interests. Uncompromising in his demand for unity in direction of the drama, which he has defined as "movement—line—action"—Gordon Craig, after having passed through a complete theatrical apprenticeship, acting, stage-managing, producing, has for twenty years devoted all his energies to the cult of the theatre. His theatrical school in the Arena Goldoni in Florence was victimized by the war, but for over twenty years his Florentine publication, the Mask, has illustrated a complete system of theatrical aesthetics, the canons of which art throughout the ages he is considered to know more thoroughly than any man alive.

While over and over again he has refused to collaborate with European theatrical managers, often withdrawing his designs at the last moment, because he realized that the theatrical conditions under which they would be produced did not ensure their purity of execution, some of Gordon Craig's more accessible ideas have been partly taken over by other producers; Professor Max Reinhardt, for example, has utilized them with enormous success on two continents.

Gordon Craig is a great inspirer, and the debt of the theatrical world to his vision is perhaps only commensurate with the burden which the limitations of

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realizing that vision placed on the mortal existence of this artistic pioneer. The limitations were the result of the commercialized theatre, necessitating, primarily, consideration of economic conditions and the consequent stifling of artistic principle. When such limitations are removed, as was the case when Mr. Craig produced Hamlet in Moscow in 1912, the result was beauty for the public and success for the artist.

While Gordon Craig, a self-constituted though not voluntary exile from his own country, was proving himself a genius to Europe, England self-defensively regarded him as a freak. But as far back as 1912 the rest of Europe hailed him as the most groundedly and provedly practical and the most visionary of stage directors and play producers. Neither pure dreamer nor plain doer, nor alternately either of these, Gordon Craig has been defined as a strange, fourth-dimensional-minded being, his eyes "unwaveringly focused on infinity, yet observant of what lies at his feet," so that though appearing shrewdly to compromise with conditions he remains uncompromisingly faithful to his vision. Toward such men, "practical idealists," the world is prone to assume the attitude of the dough toward the yeast. Such a practical idealist is Gordon Craig, who in the fifty-sixth year of his life, has not yet abandoned the dream of his own ideal theatre, and meanwhile has agreed to take the only way open to him of getting his art to America . . . to show the American public what Mr. Tyler asked him to show, "some stage settings for Macbeth."

Had Mr. Tyler given him carte blanche to produce the play, we should have had Mr. Craig here to chose his cast and supervise the painting of his scenery. But that was not in the power of Mr. Tyler, much as he would have liked to do so, and so the Macbeth at the Knickerbocker suggests rather than incorporates the art of Gordon Craig, as Mr. Craig himself has repeatedly pointed out.

On my arrival in this city less than a month ago, my first impression was that of a kinship of spirit between the art of this indefatigable reformer and researcher of the theatre and the spirit of New York, as revealed in the most characteristic monuments of her self-expression, her argus-eyed, heaven-soaring skyscrapers. The sweep and stride of these monster structures, majestic and impersonal, soaring and solitary, aloof yet purposeful, compact yet elusive, conveyed to me the same mystery and poignancy, the same balance and precision, and the same simplicity and straightforwardness, as the art of Gordon Craig, straightforward in its affirmations, mysterious in its reserves. This art of Craig, like the architecture of New York, is the psychological utilization of space, eliminating the superfluous, concentrating on the essential and molding line to the necessity of the situation. "Movement, line, action" is the spirit of the drama, he has repeatedly declared.

It is interesting to hear this autocrat of the theatre, who has never, before now, agreed to collaborate in scene production, plead for the "main idea"—the "main idea" as opposed to the "main chance." There can be no chance in perfect art, he contends; the whole thing is the result of the perfect adhesion and reference of each smallest detail to the central idea. Unity in universality—a Roman and a classic idea. Not by chance has Gordon Craig made Italy his home for the past twenty years. The true spirit of the Latin race is intimately appreciated by him. He wrote in his unique publication, the Mask:

> How I love the Italian, real, very quiet way of doing things! And how amusingly stupid it is, that the Italians are often taken for a race of opera buffisti. It is and it always has been the Italian who penetrates the essence of things and then without any fuss or display gets to work and with almost nothing produces a thing of harmony and beauty.

Mussolini, as a great artist statesman, is the delight of Gordon Craig. All artists are revolutionists, he says, and they revolt against compromise, against disorder, against the undisciplined, against all that looks like liberty and is no such thing. "I do not care a rap what can be said against Fascism as long as it can be said for the Fascists that they are men who see eye to eye, work shoulder to shoulder and follow a leader," he said on another occasion.

> That other easy game of each man thinking he is privileged to be somebody when he is nobody, that is what I cannot understand for a moment. Nature will adjust all these things in time so there is no need to bewail the situation as we find it in certain lands where the old spirit of one for all and all for one is forgotten. It is such a simple thing that brings this chaos about. It is nothing else but the universal conceit of small men. In the bygone days, if a man heard some legend of the prowess of this warrior, that artist or yonder churchman, or if he read something that this man had done or had written, or if he saw some piece of their work, he would probably be moved very deeply. Let us admit that such men exist today, that they are still moved very deeply. The difference between the two is this—in the old days these men would not, could not, rest until they had sought out the man who had given them this particular inspiration, and when they saw him they did their best to stay with him and follow him. The instinct in them said, "Let me help this man"; joining him they received their bread and butter, maybe even a roof over their heads and there an end. They became one of a clan. Soon without the awful haste of today they began to achieve just the same, perhaps even better than the man they were following. But today what happens? A young man after having read the work of some artist or seeing him perform, will have a momentary thrill but it will be only momentary. After two or three days he will tell himself that he can do as that man has done and instead of learning, instead of becoming slowly a master, he himself acts like a master and often enough runs a number of wealthy men into the bankruptcy court and thinks he is of service to his country.
>
> A people needs great persons and needs to sit on the small persons a little more, and it needs to thin out, so

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as to make place for the finer growths; it needs to forward the plans of the great persons and to do this in grand style. It needs to take great risks and not the safe road every time. "Great breeds great, and little breeds only little."

Undoubtedly Mr. Craig, after a life of intransigence, has taken a "great risk" in consenting to enter the commercialized theatre and allow the first suggestion of his scenic art to be made by designers not carried out under his supervision. But perhaps this is only another step in his life-long progress towards the new theatre of his own, the Ideal Theatre for which all his life he has written and worked.

For Thomas Walsh

(1875-1928)

I

And then, he said, exult
In the beat and caress of the wind,
O city of crags and towers,
Toledo, rock of the Moors.
Face the skies, in the thunder flashing,
There is no doom in the skies.
And the storm light your limbs, look not down,
Death is there.

Ah the river
Swift-winding
Far below.
River with an edge sharp as steel;
Like a sword on the thigh.

II

Though orange trees blossom
In the court of the Mosque at Cordoba,
Listen: the tramp of axemen nearing from the hills,
And grindstones
Singing
In the streets.

III

In the high Alhambran woods
Are running waters,
In the woods upon that hill
Are nightingales.

Near the palace is a flowering bush, an almond,
Pink its petals in the morning,
Lavender at dusk; in the deep dark invisible.
In the deep dark eyes cannot see,
In the deep dark feet cannot walk,
And what is there left of a flowering bush
In the deep dark
Invisible?
What is its worth then more than a fragrance?—
Fragrance:
A memory.

In the woods upon that hill
Are running waters,
And ghosts
And nightingales.

VINCENT ENGELS.

TÉNÈBRES

By CHRISTINE TURNER CURTIS

"PERHAPS she thought of the narrowness of the limits within which a human soul may speak and be understood by its nearest of mental kin, and of how soon it reaches that solitary land of individual experience in which no fellow footstep is ever heard."

As I read that striking reflection of Olive Schreiner's in the African Farm, I thought of that baffled sense, familiar to all adult experience, when the individual stumbles for the first time into the unforeseen and bewildering experience. For suddenly across the safe and sunny tablelands, a shadow falls, we perceive that a gulf has opened up between ourselves and our friends, in the face of some painful decision we must make, in the face of suffering or tragedy, we find ourselves unbelievably and unaccountably alone.

And I wondered why none speak of those strange and solitary wanderings, and why when they do, they plagiarize like the preachers, using worn-out and hackneyed words for experiences which at first hand are so fresh and terrifying. For certainly that secret expansion of soul which goes on with the years; those agonizing moments of inward travail by which this is brought about—these are the most important data on living.

Yet how seldom we bring these data into the light and examine them—and perhaps, after all, there is justifiable reason for this. For when we do reveal our true inner lives, people become so sceptical, so prone to think we are fabricating. What we tell them does not align with their own deductions; they cannot relate our disclosures to the character which they have built up and firmly believe to be us. So after a few distressing confidences we turn again, each to his own valley of seclusion.

What is the meaning of these sudden dismays, these defeats, these desolations that strike the heart, perhaps most often after first youth is past? For here suddenly we know a sickening impasse, a sense of having been cheated; a dissatisfaction with the foothold we have gained, a discovery that we do not know which way to turn for guide and nourishment.

Has this strange vacancy arrived because we are not developing in the logical way that the cycle of nature demands? Has some instinct beyond our penetration detected within us an element opposed to the expansion of life? Is there a hidden irritant standing in the way of spiritual advance which must be distilled, volatilized, before we can go on?

Half involuntarily and half of our own deciding have we built up the house of spirit. The expense of pulling down and recombining this subtle edifice must of necessity be costly and harrowing. Yet now that the black moments have come, the pangs fallen upon us, the rending begun, there is nothing for it but to trust to some instinctive constructivism and to know

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certainly that the essentials must emerge. Fate has taken us into her pitiless but antiseptic hands, the sacrifice must be made—it is our part to become quiescent that the agony may be soon over, and that nature may take its way. For more and more as we live do we become impressed with man's helplessness in the face of some law that drives him onward in spite of himself.

In the confusion of this onslaught, when sanity itself is in the scales, one must conclude, one must believe, that his direction has been wrong in the past—otherwise it would not have garnered for him such a miserable harvest. Yet to exorcise pain with more pain, how shall that be? Unless it is true that in every precinct of life, the way of expansion lies through suffering. Never from this travail shall the old self emerge, for all its salts and compounds will have been broken up, never again to be reassembled in the same proportions.

Yet certainly nothing brings one to these desperations but the hateful spectre of self-esteem. There is no one but clings too tightly to his personal acreage. Too often that secret irritant sweated out with pain is the insensate craving for applause, the tribute demanded by the insatiate individual consciousness. The passion to be first is with some people a cruel and overpowering master. With such it is born to hunger and thirst for approbation, attention, admiration, praise.

The emphasis of such a life is pitifully misplaced. By the very narrowness of his goal, such a person brings on himself a train of petty reverses. And to count personal failure as a calamity is to be entirely without perspective. Tragedy is seldom an affair of outward circumstance, but is rather the failure to meet some ideal of the inner life. The most tragic thing in the world is impurity of heart. To desire to think purely and to find one has muddied the clear sources of thought; to long to quicken to the exquisite and to be sogged with the sensual—that is what makes the blood run cold and a chill freeze the marrowbones. There is a hell in comparison with which other calamities are trivial. For once one has filled up with silt the companionways of the life—time, time alone, patience and prayer can avail to make the ways clean again.

Yet some will ask, why make such impossible and stringent laws for oneself? The answer is this: to those who have been accorded the vision, responsibility is tenfold multiplied. Unto those the easy, careless highway of love and laughter is forever barred.

The flesh is sweet and all its little consolations, but those have a prescience of something sweeter still. Yet the coward self, jealous of those pleasures within its grasp, is grudging and chary of the sterner adventure. For this consecration to the inner vision is an immense dare, an original coup, far more audacious than the mere flouting of a social convention. Only those dream of this accession who have an instinct for the most beautiful thing of all, those who constantly perceive through the moment of sense, the insensate gleaming of something precious and priceless. These self-ordained crusaders wear no easy yoke, but they find themselves continually at odds with life if they sacrifice the sweetest of all to the merely sweet.

But the cost, the appalling cost of steering to that small and secret goal—never to take the thoughtless road, the way of companionship, admiration, small honors—who of himself would elect to be one of the infrequent and solitary adventurers?

Yet if fate has willed a harder road, there is no gain in protest—a current has one beyond the possibility of choice. Let go, then, the kindly and familiar; in this harvest of Pentacost, all things are on the knees of the gods. Yet sloughing off these minor distractions, the smaller miseries that attach shall go with them—wider airs are for you, above the timber line, above the camp fires. If there have been prepared for you colder, calmer and more lonely ways, you shall yet have been released from the gnatlike swarm of little wretchednesses.

DOWNWARD DESCENT

By WILLIAM EVERETT CRAM

IT SEEMS to be one of nature's laws that there can be no upward development except in conflict with the ever-present tendency toward deterioration. All breeders of animals know this only too well. In a state of nature, the struggle for existence, when not too severe, holds this downward tendency in check.

Whenever the struggle with climatic conditions and overpowering foes becomes too severe, the individuals of probably any species have a tendency to become smaller and less perfect physically, with lessening reproductive powers. When climatic conditions are very favorable, food abundant and enemies scarce, reproduction usually increases rapidly, both as regards the number of young at a birth and the number of births in a season; but it seems probable that if these favorable conditions should continue over many seasons, physical deterioration and lessened reproductive power would result.

Domestic animals that are permitted to become very fat and lazy have few young. But in nature this point is probably very seldom reached. With many species, two or three seasons in succession of favorable weather conditions and abundant food, are followed by extensive migrations, usually southward, of a great majority of the best conditioned individuals, who appear to lose much of their native instinct of self-preservation, and are easily preyed upon by the natural foes of the race, or else perish in attempting to cross wide bodies of fresh water, or even the ocean itself. Epidemics often wipe out a great portion of any species that has become very abundant, and it may be that it is the intuition of the coming on of such an epidemic that gives the impetus to these sudden migratory movements. In any case those that are left behind, seem to be, as a rule, the physically inferior.

With many species, easy living, even in moderation, appears to check reproduction from the start. The breeders of foxes for their fur, have found that good feeding and warm quarters during the winter have this effect, and that a reasonable amount

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of hunger and exposure to rough weather is necessary to insure a good crop of fox cubs in the spring.

Probably the best conditions for upward development are a reasonably abundant food supply with just enough conflict with natural enemies, weather, etc., to render necessary constant alertness, skill in self-defense, swiftness in escape from foes or in pursuit of prey, and physical endurance in conflict with the weather.

I have been reading of apes, orang-utans and gorillas, narratives by naturalists and explorers in the East, dating all the way from 500 B. C. to the present, and I am particularly struck by the fact that the farther back we get, the closer does the description of these higher apes correspond to that of man. Strabo wrote that when Alexander the Great of Macedon penetrated into India with his victorious troops, more than three centuries before the birth of Christ, he encountered a multitudinous band which he conceived to be a hostile army. He made immediate preparations for attacking this force, but was informed by King Taxilla that these beings were only pacific apes which, though they moved in groups, were entirely destitute of the spirit of conquest.

From the chapter on gorillas in Goodrich's natural history, published in 1867, I take the following very interesting excerpt:

"The recent discovery and description of this animal has revived one of the curious legends of ancient history, which is as follows. At an era of some 500 years before Christ, Hanno, a Carthaginian admiral, sailed out of the Mediterranean by way of the Pillars of Hercules, or straits of Gibraltar, and founded cities on the Libyan coast. After a great variety of adventures, having proceeded as far south as the Gulf of Guinea, he came to an island in this quarter in which was a lake, and in this lake another island, filled with savages all covered over with hair. There were a great many more females than males. The Carthaginians pursued these strange people, but they fled with precipitation, and the males climbing up the steep rocks with astonishing rapidity, all escaped. Three females, however, fell into the hands of the invaders. These were very furious, biting and scratching, and refusing to follow their captors. Consequently they were killed. Their skins being taken off, were carried to Carthage, and hung up in the temple of Saturn. Here, according to Pliny, two of them remained as late as 146 B. C. when Carthage was taken and destroyed by the Romans. The name given by Hanno to the savages of which we have been speaking was gorilla, and as it is now believed that he referred to the animal of which we have been speaking, that title has been bestowed upon it. Our knowledge of it is as yet very imperfect. This is chiefly derived from Dr. Savage, an American Protestant missionary, stationed on the Gaboon River in west Africa. From his account, it appears that they live on vegetables, and build huts of sticks and leaves, supported by the branches of trees."

These and similar narratives of early date, describing apes as standing habitually erect, living in huts, etc., are usually classified as exaggerations, but, after all, why should we take this stand when we have no evidence to back it up? Twenty centuries might well be ample time for that much deterioration in a race or species steadily decreasing in numbers, as is certainly the case with all creatures of this class. There is good scientific evidence pointing that way. Embryology teaches very conclusively that the young of all living creatures pass, in their development, through most of the stages of their ancestors. The embryos of, I believe, all the anthropoid apes, as well as the young, are very much more human in appearance than are maturer individuals. In the case of the gorilla the change in this direction goes on until death, very old specimens showing scarcely any resemblance to the human form. Is it wholly inconceivable that they may have sprung from some low type of half-human savage tribe which, in their turn, were the survivals of an ancient civilized race? This view appears always to have been held by the people of the East, and may be nearer the truth than our own. Unquestionably evolution is a real thing, and still in progress. Men of various races have advanced tremendously along certain lines within quite recent history, but can we sincerely overlook the opposite downward trend, always so much in evidence whenever conditions are too easy or too adverse?

This view, I am perfectly well aware, will be denounced by many as too gloomy and depressing, and may just as well be ignored by those whose preference is for that which is cheerful and uplifting, rather than for what is true. But after all is said, what great difference is there between the sequence of maturity, decay and death of a species or tribe, and the same natural sequence, inevitably the fate of the body of the individual? May not every race or species have its life term just as has the individual, longer or shorter, according as conditions are favorable or unfavorable, but never extending beyond a certain length? Many kinds of wild life have become extinct within our memory, while others have held their own under apparently just as unfavorable conditions.

Any one of a number of destructive agencies may hasten the end, but very rarely works complete destruction, and any species possessed of a reasonable amount of vitality quickly regains its former numbers.

As an illustration I will take the following from the New England Magazine for April, 1896. Bluebirds have always been so abundant and well known that their sudden and almost complete extinction during the winter of 1895 caused widespread remark, and various theories were offered to account for it. Of these the most generally accepted was, that the fearful blizzards which kept sweeping across the country that winter killed them by the millions in their winter resorts; but perhaps the fact of their being so extensively used as ornaments on fashionable hats may have had something to do with it. Whatever the cause, their absence was evident enough when the time came for their arrival in New England. A pair of them was occasionally seen during the last of March, but that was all. Throughout the spring and early summer the most careful search failed to reveal the slightest sign of them; and now, if never before, their true value was appreciated. In July I found a small family of them in a wild stretch of woodland; but they were very shy and not in the least like the bluebirds of other summers. And yet a few seasons later they were just as abundant as ever.

Much the same series of events has occurred in the history of many species, song-birds, game birds and game animals. Apparently those that died out had already reached a low ebb in reproductive power. The wild pigeon laid but two eggs in an ill-constructed nest, the great auk and the dodo only one. A pair of condors, at best, rear but one offspring in two seasons, while the heath hen, which not so very long ago reared its chicks in broods of a dozen or more, now frequently lets whole seasons go by without even mating. Both species are very near the end.

Explorers have told us of savage tribes who refuse to believe that death ever comes to the individual except by violence, disease or accident. Do we not err in taking the same point of view of the dying out of species?

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POEMS

Not the Scarlet Rain

Not the scarlet rain of leaves,
Nor the sudden drops of spring,
Nor the sharp, impatient sleet,
Not the fall of anything

Is so beautiful to me
As the steadfast, quiet words
Of a grave December sky,
Lusterless and stripped of birds.

Slowly, softly, flake on flake,
Overwhelming field and fence;
Hushing every house and street
With the strangest eloquence.

Winter needs no warrant now;
Words of laughter and dismay
Die before this white defense,
Leaving nothing more to say.

ANNE BLACKWELL PAYNE.

On Rereading Castle Blair

Long, long ago there stood an Irish hill,
And on this Irish hill a castle stood—
Oh, limp, brown book I read each night until
My lamp flared low!—There played as faeries would
Bare-footed Winnie with her elfin face;
Brown, wise-eyed Murtaugh, tumbling back his hair;
Mischievous Bobbo; she of Gallic grace;
Milo Rose and Ellie, queen of Castle Blair.

They still are living, an immortal six,
To hunt the heathered hills for magic leaves.
They still feast high; each ardent Blair still grieves
At wicked Mr. Plunkett and his tricks.

Their splendor has not dimmed. Who would, may see
Enchanted children, clothed in mystery.

FRANCIS MURPHY.

Midnight

Dong—goes the great bell and tinkle go the clocks
Echoing through the dark house—*dong*—begins the time
Now that is not time—yesterday, tomorrow,
Are meaningless and shallow—*dong*—as words in an old rhyme.

Could one say a deed was done that a man should do—*dong*—
Now between the days, some witchery or crime?
These moments—*dong*—are magic, a part of space eternal
Fringes—*dong*—of chaos and the primeval slime.

Dong—the clocks have finished their frightened exclamations,
But the great bell—*dong*—strikes its ominous rhyme,
Dong—and pause and—*dong*—*dong*—the reverberations
Beat at last like waves—*dong*—on the solid shores of time.

ELIZABETH COATSWORTH.

Winter Gull

In wintertime among us
No gull goes out for pleasure.
What but hard business,
The narrow tenure
Of life has brought him.

Over these windy rocks
He scrabbles for a living.
Little there is to find:
The pools are bitter,
The seaweed rotten.

There, upon cold Craig Mor,
The harsh gusts huddle,
Swoop madly seaward, tear
The cloud that covers
A wild, pale sun:

Tossing the gull like spray
Where they go roaring,
Swift image in that light
Of a helpless glory
Beneath the heaven.

L. A. G. STRONG.

Portrait of a Chaucer Prof

Both tall and pale is he, and stooped and slender,
And like a stork for longitude of leg;
His voice is tremulous and thin and tender;
His head is bleak and radiant as an egg.
A nose he has, full "tretys," like a horse,
And eyes as green as any prioresse
(For in his manner there is nothing coarse)
And he is full of moral jokes, I guess!

He never catches on when pupils ask
Derisive questions timed to halt translation,
But stops and painfully pursues the task
Of settling every trivial disputation.
So when the course is through, none has learned much,
And students still think Chaucer wrote in Dutch.

ERNEST HARTSOCK.

Betrayal

There can be something high,
Arrogant, tall,
In a proud betrayal.
Not to us all
Can come the mighty silence
That fell upon the pair
As Judas' lips sealed impiously
His ruin and despair.
Yet one as small as I
Can hope somewhere to find
A proud way to defeat
Of quite another kind.

ALICE E. CLEAR.

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COMMUNICATIONS

AN AUTHOR REPLIES TO HIS CRITIC

Washington, D. C.

TO the Editor:—The reactions and judgments of a reviewer of books, in so far as they concern the literary, the aesthetic and the artistic qualities of a work or its physical format, spring from that indefinable and subtle faculty which men call taste and hence are the exercise of an indisputable, personal right. Should, moreover, his opinion be adverse, it ordinarily furnishes grounds for illuminating and profitable discussion, provided always that the disputants be open-minded and informed searchers after truth, not irrational dilettanti. From Aristotle's Poetics to the last issue of The Commonweal men have groped toward a satisfying definition of beauty and sought to fix the reasons for the elusive charm of poetry. The resulting contributions have enriched literature in all tongues and enlarged the humanities.

But it is quite a different process and a far more perilous undertaking to impugn the basic truth and accuracy of a serious historical narrative, for that is to deprive a work of the very reason for its existence. No author who respects his readers, his material or himself may maintain silence in the face of misrepresentation arising from lack of sufficient knowledge, patent misquotation or the suppression of essential facts. Least of all should he be called upon to accept the responsibility for pet theories which a reviewer translates into grievances to be saddled onto the work which he undertakes to evaluate.

With this preamble, I beg the courtesy of your pages to submit a reply to the lengthy review of The Fall of the Russian Empire which appeared in The Commonweal of September 19, over the signature of Mr. Hoffman Nickerson.

Your reviewer takes exception, in the first place, to the arrangement of material in The Fall of the Russian Empire. In that he is well within his rights as a critic but not, I am convinced, as a student of Russian history. He believes a disproportionate amount of space has been devoted to the personal destiny of the Romanov dynasty. This is a common reaction on the part of those unacquainted with the internal government of the Russian empire and the evolution of autocracy during the three hundred years of Romanov rule. Russia was a palace state whose entire life—political, economic, social and religious—derived from the autocrat as in no other society of modern times. The concentration of power in one man was absolute and his realm was administered as his "votchina," his proprietary possession. As long, therefore, as the royal family existed, the empire persisted as in an accepted symbol, and as long as the possibility of a restoration remained, the revolution was not secure, at least in the eyes of the Bolshevik victors. The imprisonment and final elimination of the czar is, therefore, in the view of the present writer, an integral part of the story of the empire's fall, and the successive stages in that tragedy of persons are inseparable from the political events that ran parallel with them. The Bolsheviks are far from agreeing with Mr. Nickerson that this episode is politically unimportant. On the contrary, they deemed it so politically necessary that they perpetrated the most hideous collective murder in recorded history in order to safeguard their position; they themselves demonstrate my contention. And, if you carry the story of the empire up to the death of the czar, with whom the monarchy definitely perished, how can you omit the provisional government, as Nicholas II was not murdered until long after the fall of Kerensky's régime?

But that, perhaps may be included among the questions of taste, to which I have referred, and is the author's deliberate choice, based upon a consideration of all the elements and arrived at after six years of consultation and research. Much more unfounded are the succeeding complaints of inaccuracy to which I may be permitted to address myself in the order of their occurrence.

"To say that the Boston Massacre made the American Revolution inevitable is mere jaunty and careless generalization."

This reference to the Boston Massacre, on page 29 of the text, is an incidental remark in support of the belief that there comes a moment in great political movements when a crisis is reached, after which there is no turning back. No insinuation is made that the Boston Massacre was the only, or the immediate, or the principal, determinant of the American Revolution. But I do maintain that, once blood was shed, once the drums of Boston beat the call to arms, once Samuel Adams defied Hutchinson in Faneuil Hall on the morrow of the slaughter, the parting of the ways had definitely come. (Cf. Bancroft, History of the United States, Volume III, page 377.) I hold with John Adams that the Boston Massacre was "the first act in the drama of the Revolution," and with Edmund Burke when he said, "there was an end of the spirited way we took when the question was, whether Great Britain should or should not govern America." (Bancroft ibidem.) And the records of the debates in the British Parliament following the receipt of the news from Boston, the protestations and prophetic warnings of Chatham, Stanhope, Camden and Burke substantiate my claim.

Mr. Nickerson's desire that more be said regarding the Russian Church is copiously provided for in a second volume now in preparation. The present writer yields to no man in his admiration for those courageous members of the Orthodox Church who suffered persecution and the tortures of martyrdom for their faith. He was an eye-witness of that phase of the Russian Church's Calvary, and has not hesitated to pay public tribute to those new names in the Russian martyrology. But the complete emancipation of the Russian Church did not begin until 1917, hence chronologically it becomes part of the forthcoming volume.

The reference made to the author's interpretation of the oath in the tennis court at Versailles, June 20, 1789, may be dismissed as unimportant. The reviewer has missed the point. The author is merely fixing a date, not describing a scene, and with the date Mr. Nickerson evidently has no quarrel.

"Worst of all is the statement that Robespierre was a Socialist."

Those who may be sufficiently interested will look in vain for this statement within the covers of The Fall of the Russian Empire. Should it be found, the author will contribute ten subscriptions for The Commonweal to persons or institutions designated by Mr. Nickerson. On page 65, however, may be found the tenuous thread upon which the reviewer hangs his misquotation, unimportant in itself, but extremely helpful to his thesis, since he triumphantly adduces it as reason for discrediting the intrinsic value of the book as a whole. In fact he makes it a sort of climax to his indictment.

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What the candid reader will there find is an enumeration of the revolutionary parties in Russia during the period of agitation. When he comes to the group called "Socialists," the author describes them as "the inheritors of the doctrines of Saint-Simon, Robespierre, Owen, Lassalle and Louis Blanc." The author is well aware—an elementary text-book on Socialism furnishes that information—that the specific term "Socialist" did not come into general use until about 1848 and is customarily identified with Robert Owen, Saint-Simon, Fourier and their successors. But no historian confines himself to primers; nor will experienced students of the growth of Socialism deny the statement made by the present author when he says that the Russian Socialists were the inheritors of the doctrines of Saint-Simon, Robespierre, Owen, Lassalle and Louis Blanc, as well as of Karl Marx. These later revolutionaries gleaned from every predecessor and called their synthesis Socialism. They originated nothing except a Lenin to execute a program of violence. In the words of that eminent historian, Nesta Webster, whose researches into Socialism were declared by Lord Sydenham in the House of Lords to be the most important contribution to history ever made by a woman: "To the attentive student of social history it seems obvious that histories of Socialism, after tracing its origins in antiquity and in the doctrines of the French philosophers, should begin their account of the movement with its earliest exponents in the French Revolution. Why so resolutely dissociate Socialism, or its equivalent Communism, from Robespierre and Babeuf?" After tracing the Bolshevik party straight back to its philosophic progenitors Mrs. Webster concludes: "Yes, decidedly for the credit of Communism it is better to keep Robespierre and Babeuf dark and to date the origins of Socialism from the teachings of such amiable visionaries as Owen, Saint-Simon, and Fourier! The admission is certainly naïve." (World Revolution, page 114.)

The present writer does not question the good faith of his reviewer in not recognizing the existence of solid historical reasons for considering Robespierre as the true father of State Socialism and the philosophic, though not the actual, formulator of the doctrine, "le droit au travail"—the duty of the state to provide every man with work. His electioneering speeches, as recorded by Montjoie (Histoire de la Conjuration de Maximilien Robespierre) with their inflammatory promises of confiscation and socialization both of land and property, furnished rich precedent for the Bolshevik victors of 1917. His speech in the Assembly on April 24, 1793, has been acclaimed by modern Socialists as clearly identifying him with French Socialism of the nineteenth century. Louis Blanc, in his Organization du Travail, further developed the teaching of his master.

These facts may or may not be known to Mr. Nickerson; I do not know the extent of his research in this field, as he has cited no authority but himself. But I do know that I have the right to protest against the unfairness of cavalierly charging me with something I never said, but which, if said, would be far more correct than he seems to imagine.

The indictment, however, does not end here. Proceeding upon the gratuitous assumption of inaccuracy thus built progressively up by misquotation and false inference, the reviewer next invites the readers of The Commonweal to conclude that the entire work is worthless:

"These things weaken our confidence in the author as a historian. Accordingly, when he treats of the origin of Russian serfdom and implies that it arose out of a previous condition of freedom and not out of a previous condition of slavery, one is a little reluctant to go along with him. That is the old but now abandoned theory of the origin of serfdom in western Europe, and if indeed the course of events was so different in Russia, then at least a few words of explanation are necessary."

The author not only implies, but here categorically reasserts, that bondage right in Russia arose out of a previous condition of freedom. He has devoted some fourteen pages (32-42 and 146-150) to explaining that process as fully as the limits of his volume would permit and depicts the extraordinary manifestation and extent of democratic freedom in the ancient Russian republics of which Pskov and Novgorod are cited as typical specimens. He points out why, where and when those democratic institutions decayed, giving place to the semi-servile status known as serfdom. He cited his authorities, chapter and verse; in one place (pages 35 and 36) he enumerates eight ways through which a man became a serf. He can but refer his reviewer to the monumental work of Kluchevsky, Sir George Mavor and Sir Bernard Pares, names of which no student of Russian history can possibly be ignorant. The reviewer's reference, consequently, to the old but now abandoned theory as to the origin of serfdom, and his request for at least a few words of explanation in the text, raises the legitimate doubt that he ever read the fourteen pages furnishing, by anticipation, the specific information which he craves.

This suspicion is further strengthened by a later remark: "There is occasional grave looseness of statement. Thus when Nicholas I overrules the local petty grafters and insists upon a straight railroad line between Moscow and St. Petersburg we read that the incident '. . . reconciles one to certain attributes of tyranny.' Now what is tyranny? In the United States, ever since the passage of the Eighteenth Amendment, correct definition of the term is increasingly necessary and no one more than a companion of Suarez and Escobar should be held to accuracy on such a point. If all absolute monarchy is tyranny then the word has little meaning. It would seem to be the only sound definition of the word to say that it means immoral action on the part of a government toward its subjects. In this issue, therefore, Nicholas I was by no means acting as a tyrant: he was acting as the father of his people."

Why did the reviewer pause at the phrase that annoyed him and refuse to continue his reading only twelve lines farther? There, in plain, inescapable language (page 32) the author has recorded his complete approbation of the action of Nicholas I in dealing with the log-rolling profiteers of his time, and specifies the particular benevolent attribute in question by saying that the Nicholas Railway remains "to all future ages, like St. Petersburg and the pyramids, a magnificent monument of autocratic power." The whole paragraph clearly expresses the author's belief that in this particular incident Nicholas I *did* act as the father of his people. Had the Russian czars used their autocratic power oftener in the same direction there might have been no slaughter at Ekaterinburg.

But the answer to the questions raised in this rejoinder is fortunately furnished by the reviewer himself in the lengthy discussion with which he ends his review:

"Finally the permanent value of the book is diminished by the failure of the author to interpret events from any other standpoint than that of nineteenth-century Victorian liberalism."

This is followed by the revelation, at last, of the controlling motive which has led Mr. Nickerson into his amazing immoderation. He is confessedly no believer in representative government or parliaments, and is frankly scornful of the capacity of democracy for further human betterment. He

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believes that Pobyedonostsev—who, in the words of Sir Bernard Pares, was a thorough despiser of human nature, who had turned reaction into a system of philosophy—is a safer guide for modern statesmen than Thomas Jefferson and the sponsors of the constitution of the United States. Mr. Nickerson would return Europe to the Bourbons, the Romanovs, the Hohenzollerns and the Hapsburgs; by implication, he regrets the waning power of the aristocratic caste in England, whose reactionary veto power in the House of Lords was annihilated by revolt of the English people within comparatively recent times. Had not British statesmen then shown their customary astuteness by acknowledging the principle of compromise, we might now be gathering material for a volume on The Fall of the British Empire. British governmental policy during the last two decades, resulting as it has in a British commonwealth of nations, is a flat denial of the thesis advanced by Mr. Nickerson. "Father Walsh," he writes, "calls Pobyedonostsev's opposition to parliament a mad policy. What is the evidence today?" The evidence, sir, is written large across the face of modern Russia and in the memoirs of countless Russian thinkers from Witte to Vinogradoff and Korff, who rued the day when the will of the people was thwarted by cynics and autocrats who subordinated reality to theory and replied to legitimate aspirations with bayonet, cartridge and knout. A long line of Russian statesmen, even members of the imperial household, begged the czar to grant substantial political reforms as the sole means of averting the catastrophe. The volume under review records their words textually on dozens of its pages. On the very eve of the revolution, the czar's own brother, the Grand Duke Michael Alexandrovitch, telephoned to the emperor at general headquarters in Mohilev a fervent petition for the formation of a new government meriting the confidence of the country. His prayer was ignored, as was an identical warning telegram, from Prince Golitsyn, president of the Council of Ministers.

Mr. Nickerson's private political beliefs have seriously impaired his critical faculty and led him into an obvious ignoratio elenchi. He has missed the point of the case in court and confounded what actually did happen in Russia with the vaster possibility of what might, should or would have happened under circumstances more to his liking.

The Fall of the Russian Empire is concerned with questions of fact. Now, if one poignant truth emerges from the testimony of informed native Russians and competent foreign observers, it is that it was the obstinate refusal of the ruling camarilla to listen to the political and economic demands of the Russian people that precipitated the final débâcle. That is the historical sequence. If The Fall of the Russian Empire truthfully records these realities and depicts the successive stages in their development, traces effects to their causes and records both as ontological verities, it has fulfilled the obligation of a dispassionate historical narrative. Anything more would not be history but clairvoyance, divination, or an ex parte apology, either for the monarchy or for Bolshevism. Mr. Nickerson, abhorring the excesses of the revolution, as we all do, is angry with the facts as they happened and so upbraids incontinently the narrator who recorded impartially the storm cloud as it gathered, the deluge as it broke, and the flood tide that engulfed the Muscovite empire.

It is an abuse of public confidence to utilize a book review, which should confine itself to objective and scientific criticism, as a pretext for political theorizing that easily degenerates into petulant propaganda.

Rev. Edmund A. Walsh, S.J.

New York, N. Y.

To the Editor:—Princess Radziwill and Father Walsh have written to you regarding my review of the latter's The Fall of the Russian Empire. Place aux dames, let me first deal with the lady.

Princess Radziwill very courteously differs with my remark. "If . . . the theme is Russia then the details of the imprisonment and death of the imperial family are politically unimportant." With all she says as to the importance of Nicholas and the czarina, I am in full agreement. The point of my sentence was the word "details" and my complaint against Father Walsh in that particular matter was that he has given only sixty pages to the unhappy pair while they were actively ruling Russia and seventy to the months between the abdication and the murders. During this time, although they remained potential political figures, they had lost their power to command. Certainly their death was a first-rate political event, but as certainly sixty pages to their whole active lives and seventy to their lives when powerless in the hands of their enemies is a serious error in proportion from which Princess Radziwill's own artistic sense would easily have saved her had she been the writer.

Her second point is that I was wrong in saying that in prewar St. Petersburg everyone went to Mass. When she tells me that there was an element of legal compulsion in their church-going, I am content to believe her, but if she means that that legal compulsion could have been the means of producing not only the great crowds which thronged the St. Petersburg churches Sunday after Sunday but also their devotion when they got there, then I must respectfully differ with her. Furthermore, no law drove the thousands of Russian pilgrims, both peasant and gentlefolk, to Jerusalem, and their fervor no one who saw it could forget.

She speaks of my "arguments about parliamentarism." My review contains statements of fact which I believe to be true. On rereading it I can find no argument, and I intended none.

I now turn—with regret—from Princess Radziwill to Father Walsh. I say with regret for two reasons: first, since The Commonweal—with a most liberal hospitality—has printed a letter from him nearly three times as long as the original review, so that space forbids my dealing with more than a fraction; second, because he repeats the faults for which I blamed the book, and therefore lays upon me the tedious duty of once more pointing them out.

The critical office must be exercised with justice. Merely to praise work not of the first rank is to prostitute that office. On the other hand criticism, like other functions of life, should be exercised with charity. A reviewer compelled in conscience to condemn a book should praise it or its author wherever he justly can. This I did, saying Father Walsh was a distinguished man, that his book was well worth reading, and that he was unquestionably well qualified to write on Russia.

In the review as originally written I also praised him in no less than three paragraphs which the editors of The Commonweal, for reasons best known to themselves, cut out. In these paragraphs I said that he was a conspicuously good citizen, that his book was a temperate and readable piece of writing which refreshingly revived the good custom of occasional apt quotations from the Latin. I further praised him for insisting, in a manner that is both true and timely, that history is not a science but an art. I applauded him for not shirking the difficult and delicate Jewish question. When the review was printed I noticed the omission of my very moderate paragraph about the Jews. In a letter written September 27, I pro-

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tested to Mr. Williams against this omission and also against any other unauthorized omissions in what I wrote, and Mr. Williams very graciously said that the editors would do as I wished in the future. I am sincerely sorry that I did not notice at that time that the other two paragraphs of praise had also been cut out.

So also for the sake of charity, a reviewer when he condemns should say only enough to warn his readers against a work, without piling up blame so as to cause the author needless pain. This also I did, forbearing to mention his failure to depict the picturesque and baffling Russian national character or that of prominent individuals such as Kerensky, to whom he devotes considerable space, and in general his failure to add substantially to the accounts of the Russian revolution by Paléologue, by Princess Radziwill herself, by Buchanan, or even by men like Claude Anet. I contented myself with saying that the book was irregular in arrangement, suspect in its history, sometimes gravely inaccurate in its use of language, and that the political ideas of its author seemed a little naïve for a highly educated man of 1928.

The point about arrangement has already been mentioned in replying to Princess Radziwill. That about history I will briefly discuss under two heads.

First, the American Revolution: can it possibly be maintained that the Boston Massacre made the American Revolution inevitable, in the sense that Concord and Lexington plus the British decision to crush the resulting continental insurrection made it inevitable? Even after this last decision was fully known, so highly talented and well informed an observer as Vergennes could hardly bring himself to believe that the Cabinet in London would attempt so large and so thankless a task.

Second, the alleged Socialism of Robespierre: Father Walsh challenges me to cite authorities to the contrary. For the sake of argument let him assume me as ignorant as a sheep of the matter in hand. Even then, since every educated man and woman knows that in general the men of the French Revolution were fanatically devoted to the idea of well-divided individual property—a program the very reverse of Socialism—the burden of proof is on him. Of course, if he wishes to use the word as a vague catch-all for any confiscation or any subversive movement, then there is nothing to be said. If he wants a definable meaning for the word, then he must admit it means state—or more rarely, gild—ownership of the means of production, capital and land. If he can show Robespierre denying the moral right of individual ownership, especially in land, and during his period of power attempting anything like a régime of public ownership, then he will have proved his point and I shall be the first to applaud such a novel and startling contribution to knowledge. I greatly fear, however, that he can do nothing of the sort, and that by persisting in his error he is misleading others less learned than himself as to the whole philosophy of the French Revolution.

I repeated the charge of misleading and inaccurate language, citing his use of the word "tyranny" in connection with a good deed done by a czar because, on reading the passage, it would be natural to assume that its author confused the idea of tyranny with that of absolute monarchy. Since such a confusion, if it really existed in Father Walsh's mind, would force him to condemn Constantine and Saint Louis of France as tyrants, I can only wonder how he managed to miss the point, and why he has imagined I thought he disapproved of the good deed in question.

I come now to what appear to be his naïve political ideas. Because I said that England when aristocratic was prosperous and powerful, he accuses me—making it up as he goes along, for there is not a syllable of mine to support him—of desiring so grossly anti-national a form of government in this country. Any patriotic American, were he half as touchy as Father Walsh himself, would be justly resentful of such a charge. I prefer to hope that perhaps he was trying to be funny, in which case I can applaud at least his good intention and urge him to develop his talent in this field.

He goes on—again without a syllable of mine to justify him—to say that I am "scornful . . . of democracy." I can only meekly reply that, like most sensible men, I suppose, under conditions favorable to it I believe democracy to be the best form of government. What I originally said was that democracy was having a bad time in Europe just now.

He goes on to add further entirely unsupported imaginations about my longing to restore the Bourbons, the Romanovs, the Hohenzollerns, the Hapsburgs and the British aristocrats, lumping them together as if all five were one, about my preferring Pobyedonostsev to the founders of the American constitution and so on. As to Pobyedonostsev's opinion of parliamentarians and the American estimate of them, I happen to have been a state legislator myself and can vividly remember the evil motives attributed—as if as a matter of course—to members who saw fit in the course of their official duty to take an unpopular stand.

In closing permit me to give him a bit of information, and on the strength of that a gentle reminder and a word of friendly advice. The information is that I helped found The Commonweal in the hope of serving certain ideas and ideals common to us both, and am therefore unlikely to have used its columns for the base purposes he imputes to me. The gentle reminder is that he has charged me with misquotations without showing that I have misquoted him by as much as a comma, with "amazing immoderation" where he has failed to show an immoderate phrase, with petulance when he has failed to quote a petulant word, with unpatriotic opinions and with propaganda when I have merely called attention to facts written large across post-war Europe. The advice—of which he seems to stand in some need—is that the Society of Jesus has an enviable and well-deserved reputation for suavity and good manners which reputation is not advanced by such tactics.

HOFFMAN NICKERSON.

(We have printed the foregoing correspondence in full, with the hope that no injustice will have been done to either side. Needless to say, Mr. Nickerson's point of view is in no way to be taken as representing the opinion of the editors themselves.—The Editors.)

AFTER THE ELECTION

Portland, Ore.

TO the Editor:—Political leaders of both major parties, we are told, are very desirous that there be no further discussion of the part played by religious bigotry in the recent presidential campaign. Catholics are asked to forgive and forget and to bend all their energies toward making the incoming administration a prosperous and happy one. Governor Smith, it is said, has set us a splendid example in his magnificent telegram of congratulation to the President-elect.

But these leaders may just as well understand that it will be a long, long time before most American Catholics will forget the intolerance which characterized much of the opposition to their co-religionist. They may indeed forgive because they

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are taught to love even their enemies. Forgetting is another matter. Moreover, it is very doubtful whether it would be the wiser thing to attempt to forget. A constitutional right, one that is fundamental in our system of government, has been openly attacked. The un-American doctrine that a candidate for public office must pass a religious test, has been a great and possibly a decisive factor in the campaign. Fears were expressed for the fate of the Eighteenth Amendment were the Democratic nominee to be elected. To prevent such a calamity as the legal repeal of this one amendment, another of tremendous importance was deliberately but illegally nullified. The right of a Catholic to aspire to the highest office within the gift of the electorate has been denied.

I wish to second the proposal of the editor of The Commonweal, when he urges renewed efforts for educating our non-Catholic fellow-citizens, so that they may possess a fuller knowledge of the teachings of the Church.

But I maintain that what is of even greater need, in the light of what has occurred, is a campaign of instruction, nation-wide in scope, upon the rights granted by the constitution of the United States to all citizens, irrespective of creed.

Catholics are not alone in their feeling of deep resentment at the fanaticism of political parsons, and the thorough-going insincerity of those who employed or abetted them. Millions of fair-minded non-Catholics are with us in this matter.

It is not at all improbable that the fifteen millions who supported Governor Smith, plus many other millions who may have voted for his opponent, will be called upon to consider the formation of a new political party, a 100 percent American organization in the true sense of the term. For how can they be expected to continue their allegiance to either the Republican or Democratic party as at present constituted? They have read of the charges made against men high in the councils of the Republican national committee, charges repeated by Governor Smith at the close of the campaign and not as yet met satisfactorily. They have likewise read of the un-American activities of certain Democratic leaders in the South, both before and after the Houston convention.

Is it surprising that large numbers of our people are ready to abandon the older parties and affiliate with a new one, standing for pure unadulterated Americanism? They await the rising of the right leader—may God speed his coming!

RICHARD J. FITZMAURICE.

WHY THE CATHOLIC COLLEGE?

San Antonio, Tex.

TO the Editor:—Recently, I received a communication, in the nature of a form letter, from one of our Catholic colleges in the Southwest, setting forth the purposes, aims and objects of Catholic education of college grade. The letter was so thorough in its every word that it would ill behoove me to attempt to supplement it. However, in view of the postscript, welcoming suggestions, I would add just another thought, in answer to the oft-repeated query, "Why the Catholic college?"

If for no other reason than that it serves as one of the few remaining forces having as an objective the disproving of the popular doctrine of "faith in matters scientific (?) but agnosticism in matter religious."

It may, indeed, appear strange, but it is nevertheless true, that modern secular education has surrounded the study of the sciences with a dogmatic sanction that dare not be questioned; and, in the same breath, it not only decries dogma in matters religious, but would fain ridicule it with a so-called tolerance that says, "So far you may go, and no farther." At best (adopting the college vernacular) in matters scientific, faith is compulsory; but, in matters religious, it is merely optional, and, even then, it is anticipated that the option will not be exercised. The Catholic college does not reverse these propositions, nor does it attempt the impossible, in an endeavor to reconcile them.

Science and religion do not constitute opposite poles. They are both positive forces, neither detracting from nor supplementing the other. The modern secular college, however, fails to evaluate them honestly. It, therefore, remains the distinct privilege of the Catholic college to furnish the educational medium whereby the student is enabled to obtain a proper perspective of both, without disparagement of either.

EDWARD H. LANGE.

ANGLO-SAXONS AND OTHERS

Westfield, N. J.

TO the Editor:—May I say a few words in reply to Mr. Desmond Fitzpatrick's letter of October 17?

Without indulging in any phrenological animadversions, I would like to call to Mr. Fitzpatrick's attention the fact that in my previous letter on Anglo-Saxons and Others, I did not make the claim that the names therein mentioned were never borne by Irishmen, nor even that they were never of Gaelic derivation, but only that they were also common in England in early times and under circumstances plainly indicating an English origin. For example, Farley may be a Gaelic name; it is also an English one derived from places named Farley in Staffordshire, Kent, Surrey and Wiltshire, or Fairleigh in Somerset, or Farleigh in Hampshire. There are records of persons bearing that name who resided in Somerset and Wiltshire in the reigns of Edward I and Edward III. Similarly, Haley comes from Hailey in Oxford, or Heighley in Norfolk, or a number of other places with names like High lea, or Hale lea (sloping meadow) or Haigh lea (hedged meadow). The similarity to the Gaelic name Healy is a mere coincidence.

As for Burke (de Burgh) this was, of course, never a Gaelic name, but was introduced into Ireland by the English. It was known in England as early as the time of William the Conqueror, and was apparently derived from Burgh in Suffolk.

The question at issue is whether these names of dual derivation were, as they occurred in Massachusetts in the eighteenth century, of Irish or English origin, and neither Dr. Walsh nor Mr. Fitzpatrick has given any evidence whatever that they were Irish. A little real evidence to this effect would be far more convincing than wild charges of a conspiracy among historians to discredit the Irish race.

May I remark in conclusion that there is something amusing in Mr. Fitzpatrick's idea that an anti-Irish Scotchman is "an emigrant renegade Gael or Irishman" merely because some of his ancestors may have come from Ireland a thousand years ago and he admires their descendants more than he does the descendants of those Irishmen who did not migrate to Scotland at that time.

RUFUS S. TUCKER.

The title page and index for Volume VIII of The Commonweal are now ready. These will be sent upon request. Arrangements have been made for binding Volume VIII in leather or cloth. Information on binding will be given upon application to the offices of The Commonweal.

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THE PLAY

By R. DANA SKINNER

The Wild Duck

MANY people consider The Wild Duck Ibsen's masterpiece. Certainly in its revival of three seasons ago it blazed into light in a way that set it far above Ibsen's other plays in reality of emotion, in simplicity of outline and in directness of treatment. The present revival, less brilliant in general effect, still confirms the earlier impression. The Wild Duck is full of Ibsen's perverted and twisted philosophy, full of the ingrained despair which comes from judging human actions solely in human perspective; but considered strictly as a contribution to the art of the theatre, it is a dramatic masterpiece.

You might sum up the total effect of Ibsen's writings by asking this question: "If life is really this tangled mess, this jumble of selfish instincts, foolish decisions and tragic consequences, if suffering has no meaning beyond what we see on the surface, then why permit life to continue at all?" Ibsen evidently asked himself this question many times, and answered it partly through the frequent suicides of his own characters. If it ever occurred to him that suffering could be a creative force, he never wrote that discovery into a play. Nor does he ever seem to think of life in the persepctive of mankind struggling through the test of suffering to God. He is a reporter of life in the valley—but a reporter who has never glimpsed a sunrise from the crest of a hill. He knows only the darkness, and is unable to illuminate it. He is strong in presenting objective truth, but pitiably weak in understanding of the subjective truths and the spiritual instincts which have the power to transform the life struggle into a quest for the Grail.

Thus The Wild Duck is an extraordinarily faithful reporting of the miseries men inflict on themselves through incompetence, through busybody idealism and through sins of the flesh. But it utterly fails to report the inner forces through which men occasionally triumph over their own weaknesses and mistakes.

In the present revival, Blanche Yurka is again playing the rôle of Gina Ekdal—and with what magnificent depth of characterization! Her interpretation has grown in the power of emotional restraint. You now feel a hidden fire beneath the outer placidity of Gina's life which was absent before. It more than prepares you for that brief but astounding outburst of pent-up emotions just before the last act curtain. Blanche Yurka can raise such a moment to the heights of real power and greatness. Ralph Roeder is by no means as good as Tom Powers in the rôle of Gregers Werle. He is perhaps more furtive than Powers, more convincingly neurotic, less cruelly satiric—and by all rights this should make his performance a better one. But his throaty diction and his technically labored effects stand between his conception of the part and the effect that reaches the audience. Dallas Anderson, on the other hand, is a vast improvement over Warburton Gamble as Hjalmar Ekdal—less of a caricature and far more believable. As between the present Hedvig of Linda Watkins and the former one of Helen Chandler, there is little to choose. Helen Chandler achieved something which was very near to perfection. Linda Watkins, for her part, does no less. (At the Forty-ninth Street Theatre.)

The Age of Innocence

MARGARET AYER BARNES has written this dramatization of Edith Wharton's novel—and Gilbert Miller as producer has handed over to the luminous Katharine Cornell the task of bringing it to life. Those who have read the novel seem to be dissatisfied with the result. As one who has not read the novel, I can simply report that the play has far more to it than nine-tenths of the trash with which we have been surfeited this season, yet still manages to leave one unstimulated. The characters struggle toward right ends—yet seldom for the right reason, or, more accurately, seldom for the finest reason.

In general, it is a picture of the problems raised by the social life of New York in the 70's. Newland Archer, a young and rising reform politician, is engaged to, and later marries, May Vanderluyden. But even before his marriage he has fallen hopelessly in love with the Countess Olenska—a New York girl whose tragic marriage to a perverted and penniless Polish count has brought her back to her own country in terror and double exile. The Countess, in a self-sacrificing mood all too rare in these later days, persuades him to go through with his marriage and then to live up to his responsibilities. There comes a moment, however, when the situation is too strong for both of them, followed by a complete renunciation on Olenska's part when she discovers that Newland's wife is about to have a child. A last scene, forty years later, shows us the ashes of a love which has survived, but which cannot lead to reunion.

We might summarize the defects of the play by saying that the inherent rightness or wrongness of an action never seems to weigh as much in the balance as the lesser motive of not seeking happiness at the expense of another person. Social consequences, damage to career and like motives also play a considerable part. This is probably quite true to life as we know it—yet it is precisely the introduction of the rarer and finer motives which gives true glamour and importance to a play. In this case, we see a great deal of the suffering and repression involved in heroic sacrifice, but very little of the compensating exaltation. We see outer facts, but little of inner realities. That is probably why its total effect is rather depressing.

Miss Cornell emerges from the test a much finer actress than ever. She has a chance here to express qualities of true emotion quite different from such meretricious characters as Iris March or the heroine of The Letter. In the supporting cast, there is some excellent work by Katharine Stewart, Giannina Gatti and the lovely Eden Gray. There is one superb characterization by that masterly German actor, Arnold Korf, and, unfortunately, one very poor piece of work by Rollo Peters as Newland Archer. Mr. Peters has a distressing habit of making love or vowing despair to that group of spectators sitting in the middle of the first balcony. The effect is hardly flattering to Miss Cornell. It reminds one of those operatic tenors who sing love duets with their eyes glued on the prompter's box. But Miss Cornell is almost the farthest thing from an operatic soprano which one is able to conceive of—which leaves no reason for the dramatic crime! (At the Empire Theatre.)

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THERE is one scene of magnificent "theatre" in the second act of this play by Harry Hervey and Carleton Hildreth; there are also many scenes of pictorial beauty, which create a gently soporific mood, thanks to Cleon Throckmorton's settings and the direction of Rouben Mamoulian. But the subject-matter of the play is pure drivel, and as consecutive drama it merely does not exist.

The action all takes place in the French protectorate in Indo-China, and the story concerns itself with the slow embitterment and gradual rise in social influence of a certain half-French, half-native girl who follows the custom of becoming the house companion of successive officers stationed in the region. Before beginning her career, she was in love with a native, and has a child by him. So far as the play has any theme at all, it is a study of the damaging moral effect of civilization on the natives. But the palpable fact is that the play has been written for the box office, and that whatever faint value it might have had as a social study of life in a French oriental protectorate has been obscured by the vulgarity and obscenity of much of the dialogue and the patent featuring of promiscuous situations. It is entirely unworthy of serious consideration and simply adds one more to the long list of offerings seeking to turn the atmosphere of eroticism into cash. Helen Menken lends her talent to this parade, and does what fine actresses generally do under such circumstances—throws an aura of glamour and pseudo-respectability about what is, intrinsically, an unhealthy and vastly unimportant subject. (At the Sam H. Harris Theatre.)

A Most Immoral Lady

WHENEVER a modern play is rather less immoral than usual, the managers have a habit of baiting the public by a suggestive title. This is what has happened in the case of Townsend Martin's play, which really concerns itself with a couple who eke out their income by blackmail. The wife, Laura Sargent, throws a pose of being cold and unapproachable, and thus leads on various wealthy men to make love to her. When she considers the time ripe, she arranges with her husband to be left alone with them for a short period, the husband returning at the right time with a witness. By agreeing to settle "out of court," he manages to pay the month's bills.

Of course Laura falls seriously in love with one youngster, and this complicates matters enough to permit Laura (Alice Brady) to indulge in one of those twitching emotional scenes for which she is duly and justly famous. A ridiculous third act in a Russian café in Paris ends all the difficulties—with the expected and obvious aid, naturally, of the Paris divorce courts.

Of course the morality of plays today has become an exceedingly relative matter. You will look long and far to find any play which takes account of any standard of action other than "good form" or momentary happiness. And even Channing Pollock in his alleged "morality," Mr. Moneypenny, puts in enough detailed and illustrative material about vice to be sure of touching the box-office nerve. But the hypocrisy of the whole situation becomes particularly obvious when a title like the present one is used to bolster up a stupid story, and when a sugar-pill title like Young Love is used to mask the explicit doings of the companionate marriage philosophy. Theatrical producing has become chiefly an orgy in the hunt for erotic sensations. (At the Cort Theatre.)

BOOKS

A Rough-Blocked Tragedy

The Silver Tassie: a Tragi-Comedy, by Sean O'Casey. New York: The Macmillan Company. $1.75.

WE HAVE not read the correspondence between William Butler Yeats and Sean O'Casey which resulted from the former's veto of the production of this play at the Abbey Theatre. A great critic, of catholic taste, and generous to his contemporaries, Senator Yeats's reasons doubtless were ponderable; yet we cannot imagine what they could have been. There are crude and raw things here which might well have shocked the gentle poet of The Land of Heart's Desire, but he has endured a world of crude and raw things since then. There is irreverence here, but it is the irreverence of the characters in the drama, while that alleged irreverence which caused The Countess Cathleen to be hooted by Catholic students was the author's own. And it can hardly be feared that The Silver Tassie would not act. We can recall nothing in dramatic literature more completely self-acting than the first act of this play. The rest of it would present difficulties, and indeed the second and fourth acts drag in the reading, yet that merely sets a task for producer and mummers. And that task is well worth facing, for O'Casey has given us in The Silver Tassie not only one of the biggest dramas of the age, but one that is pregnant, beyond any we can think of, with possibilities of a new birth of drama on the large lines that Athens knew, and the days of Shakespeare.

The Silver Tassie was written by a man who is presently impatient with conventions and limitations, an impetuous and wrathful man who, unable to find a clear path to his purpose, slashes, not without a kind of savagery, right and left, hews himself a path and gets there, however rough the going. The realism, relieved or marred, as you will, by farce, which served him in Juno and the Paycock, and The Plough and the Stars, was not sufficient for this angry man's message. And so he turned to the last thing we would have expected him to turn to—poetry. What he has done here, boldly and without apology, is to make his crude people, in their crude environment—tenement dwellers in their rookery, ribald soldiers in their trench-mud, lecherous boys and common women—break into rhythmic, sometimes even rhymed speech, heightened by imagery far beyond their natural speech, whenever he, their creator, needs that heightened speech to lift his idea up above the drabness of life. He has dared to play in and out of the bounds of reality. But is not that what all great dramatists did until Ibsen put his straitjacket upon Melpomene? Some of the rhythmic passages are far from easy reading; but we have an idea that they will speak with tremendous effect. There is more to wonder at, however, in what O'Casey, the bitter realist, has achieved in poetry, than in what he has failed to achieve. When the Second Soldier chants

> "God, and I smoked and walked and watched the
> Dance of a golden Brimstone butterfly,
> To the rustling pipe of a greenfinch resting
> In a drowsy, brambled lane in Cumberland—"

he is wholly within the frame of O'Casey's play, yet his words have their sudden relation to centuries of pastoral poetry. In his search for means, O'Casey goes back in places to the devices of alliteration and assonance which were the first modes of English and of Irish poetry respectively; witness these strangely fascinating lines:

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"Jazzing back to his hotel he now goes gaily,
Sheltered and safe where the clock ticks tamely."

And assuredly there is poetry of a very big mold in this stanza chanted by wounded soldiers on their stretchers:

"The power, the joy, the pull of life,
The laugh, the blow, and the dear kiss,
The pride and hope, the gain and loss,
Have been tempered down to this, this, this,
The pride and hope, the gain and loss,
Have been tempered down to this."

but the most another soldier can make of it is, "There's a Gawd knocking abaht somewhere."

This is not entertainment, but grim commentary, loaded with truth, with blood, tears, profanity and lechery. It is very imperfect, does not always come off, and the moments of farce are crude although at times they heighten that strange atmosphere of fantasy, just a shade off reality, which gives the play much of its weird effectiveness. It is a rough-blocked work of art, somewhat like a Rodin sculpture, with unsubdued planes and many sharp corners; but it is a word of art, and power is emerging from it.

SHAEMAS O'SHEEL.

Matters Heretical

The Stammering Century: Eccentricity and Fanaticism in the United States, 1800-1900, by Gilbert Seldes. New York: The John Day Company. $5.00.

NO STUDENT of popular religion can afford to ignore the phenomena of mid-Victorian America. Seldom in the life of any nation have more religious and social-religious experiments been made than in the United States during the "stammering century," the phrase which Mr. Seldes takes from Greeley to describe the nineteenth. And seldom has orthodox Christianity been more strikingly vindicated than in its pragmatic conquest over a great centrifugal religious movement.

Mr. Seldes has set himself the task of writing the history of religious phenomena from the day of Jonathan Edwards to that of Mary Baker Eddy. His object is to deal with "sects, cults, manias, movements, fads, religious excitements, and the relation of each of these to the others and to the orderly progress of America in the past hundred years." He has no desire to "prove anything"; "I did want to compose a sort of anatomy of the reforming temperament and to follow it, by winding roads, to the spiritual settlements it made itself." In the author's view, when Jonathan Edwards informed the congregation at Enfield, Connecticut, in 1741, that "God holds you over the pit of hell, much in the same way as one holds a spider, or some loathsome insect, over the fire," he sowed the seed of "religions without hell and cults without God." "By setting a high price on salvation, Edwards had deterred thousands from attempting to achieve it."

And so the author of The Seven Lively Arts traces the decline and fall of Calvinistic theology in the United States. He presents the various leaders of cults and communities from the Shakers, down through the camp-meeting epoch, Moody and Sankey, Frances Willard, Carrie Nation, Aimée McPherson and Uldine Utley. His is the epic of the "tireless and angry artillery-men of the Gospel," of the Rappites, the Brook Farms and the Oneida communities, right through to the spiritualistic frauds of Fox sisters and the business structure of the Church of Christ, Scientist.

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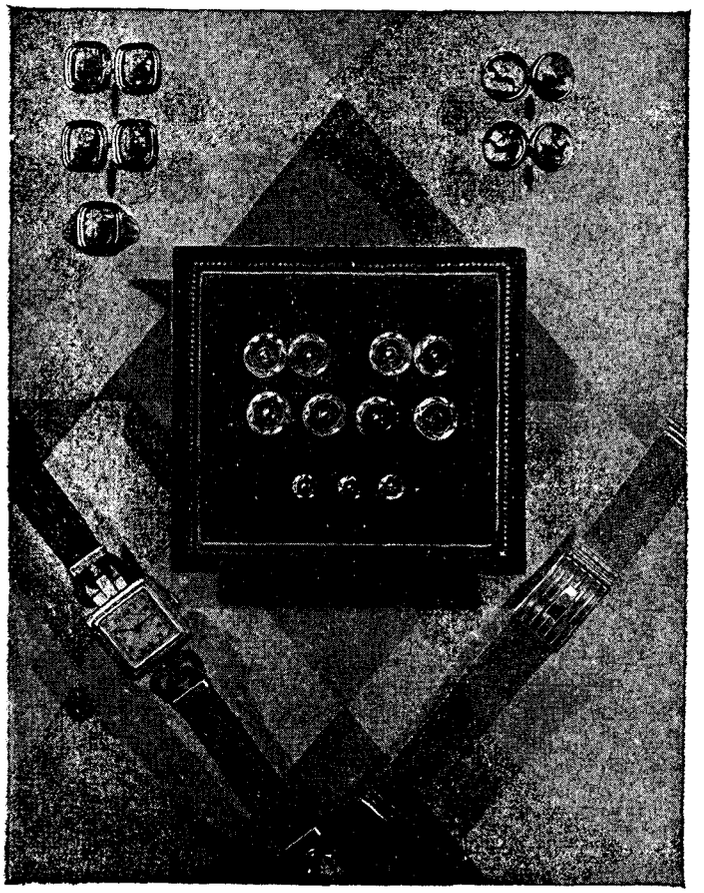

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John Humphrey Noyes's cult of Perfectionism may serve as an example for all. He invented a steel rat trap which assured a capitalistic income to his communistic experiment, but when he wrote his mother from New Haven that he was perfect, she exclaimed to her daughter, "What does John mean?" When his community was in full blast he proclaimed "the necessity of incest and in-breeding, if man is to produce a perfect race." "There is no question," writes Mr. Seldes, "that Noyes worked out a sexual relation pleasing to men and women, that they accepted it with eagerness and continued to practise it until outsiders managed to interfere."

For the rest, Mr. Seldes writes with a light and agreeable pen. Of Frances Willard, the evangelist of the W.C.T.U., he says, "At its service she placed the mind of a statesman, the spirit of a sentimental saint, and a demoniac energy." While admitting that "it is fairly obvious that Carrie A. Nation was a freak, slightly deranged," he feels that "somehow, the milieu of bootleggers, corrupt revenue officers, hijackers and night-club speakeasies, seems to call for her presence." And there is a world of social and political acumen in his deduction that "one reason for the success of women reformers is their extraordinary guile."

While he does not prove anything in his "anatomy of the reforming temperament," Mr. Seldes does present certain conclusions, or obiter dicta. In his introductory note he remarks: "The astounding thing about almost all the quackeries, fads and movements of the past hundred years in America is that they were first accepted by superior people, by men and women of education, intelligence, breeding, wealth and experience. Only after the upper classes had approved, the masses accepted each new thing." And in his closing pages he refers again to "an almost universal law, namely, that education, and even the possession of intellect, form no bar to the ravages of superstition, provided it sounds scientific," and further confesses his amazement "that the exposure of a fraud is one of the least successful ways of combating it." An older book than The Stammering Century makes some remark about concealing things from "the wise and prudent" and revealing them unto babes, which seems to be in order here.

We repeat, the history of American religiosity in the nineteenth century is a priceless treasure for the student of theology. In the first place, it is thoroughly documented. No heresy hunts or inquisitions have obliterated the traces of repugnant creeds. In the second place, it is a demonstration that Newton's law—that to every action there is an equal and opposite reaction—is applicable to religion as well as science, and that you cannot preach too grim a theology without planting the seeds of social and ecclesiastical revolt. Again, it is a striking evidence of the staying and recuperative powers of Christianity that, even when abusing its relation to the public authority, it should have conquered the extraordinary mélange of social experiment and religious fraud which was rampant in the stammering century.

In criticism of Mr. Seldes, however, one must admit that, while Werner's book on Brigham Young is admirable, he was poorly advised to neglect the Mormon movement and that his treatment of Christian Science is very casual. Considering that these two are the only creeds founded in nineteenth-century America that have preserved their vitality, one would wish that the author of this amusing study had dwelt on their humble origins with greater force. His sardonic touch would have been as well employed in vivisecting the quick as in dissecting the dead.

JOHN CARTER.

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Dreams of a New Age

The New Image, by Claude Bragdon. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. $3.00.

THIS book is wonderfully beautiful. If beauty and truth are one and the same thing, the book is also true—profoundly so, as it appears to me. It is beautiful in thought, beautiful in feeling, beautiful in wording: the words that Mr. Bragdon uses proving themselves to be, as he requires of words, "not things which are blown, like bubbles, but forged, like swords." Such words are fittingly accompanied by seven decorative plates in white on black, illustrative of the twelfth essay in the book, Experiments in a Language of Form—which, possibly because the decorations illustrate so perfectly, is almost the most fascinating of the seventeen short essays, here united to form a whole. But it is hard to choose, where all seem pregnant with possibilities for life and art. The papers treat of "the psyche of woman," of Eros and his worship, of religion, architecture, music, the theatre "as a purpose" and as a place; of archetypes, "divine arithmetic," the "magic square," the fourth dimension, and unity of being. These are, as Mr. Bragdon says, "all parts of the same pattern, for which I can find no more revealing title than The New Image, because here are projected, as I believe, shapes which will increasingly take form in the mind of the future—nebulous and pale precursors of a more clear and rosy dawn. My object has been, in the words of André Gide, 'to provide food for curiosities still unformed, to satisfy requirements not yet defined, so that the child of today may be astonished tomorrow to find me in his path.' "

To do this—to be "a builder of the future, that is, a receiver and reflector of the new images of the new age," is an ambition high as a man can hold. In Mr. Bragdon's case it seems to me to be sustained by the achievement of this book. And if he truthfully reflects the images of the new day, it holds for man secrets of harmony and vital peace, capable of transfiguring the sordid-seeming issues of our present struggle by a wide radiance which, to at least one reader, seems to portend the rising of stars hitherto unseen.

I had read none of Mr. Bragdon's earlier books, so that I opened this one with no idea of what I was to find. The full-page decorations caught me instantly—"each one an attempted translation, in terms of projected ornament, of the seven notes of the major diatonic musical scale"—as also did the chapter headings, strangely fascinating and living patterns of interwoven line. These all possessed a quality I had not before encountered in a work of art, and delayed me greatly in my reading of the book; for I kept stopping to try and find the key to their significance long before I arrived at the twelfth essay, which describes the undertaking and the purpose of these "exercises in abstract design," worked out according to dynamic symmetry. The seven plates would be delightful mounted together, so as to meet the eye as a sequential unit, instead of one by one. I should like to live with them—to wake and see them in the early morning; and to let them give the keynote for my sleep. For they excite and calm in equal measure—as does the whole book. To read it made me feel as I have felt on a sweet summer night, lying on some high hill beneath a glittering sky full of the interplay of constellations, broken by sudden flash of shooting stars. One longs to stay forever under that "golden galaxy," imagination stirred and quickened into envisaging undreamed-of possibilities, to be in time disclosed.

So, the first reading finished, I started to reread it then

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and there, though it was nearing midnight: and I did read it three times in five days. But my comment on the book, except so far as it suggests my own reaction to its magic, has no more worth than if, ignorant as I am of all astronomy, I should endeavor to describe what lay within the panorama of the sky—those "worlds not realized" with which we none the less feel strange affinities. Among them Mr. Bragdon seems to move with poise and knowledge deriving from the wisdom both of the East and West.

One of the secrets of the spell his writing casts lies, I believe, in the lucidity with which abstract conceptions are conveyed to a quite unlearned mind: so that, while one is conscious that more intimate acquaintance with the writings and the practices of oriental sages, with mathematics, music and design, would properly increase power to see as Mr. Bragdon sees, it yet is not essential for an intelligent appreciation of the ideas he may desire to convey, which are projected with a force and clarity such as we may associate with the mysterious force of life itself. No one once touched by it is likely to forget the dreams it wakens.

MARGARET KENDALL.

Chance Adventure

The Thought Broker, by Samuel McChord Crothers. New York: Houghton Mifflin Company. $2.00.

DR. CROTHERS'S posthumous collection of essays puts us in mind of the old-fashioned title of Thomas Hood's old-fashioned volume, Whims and Oddities. But whereas Hood's Whims are robustly funny stories and verses illustrated with robustly funny pictures, Mr. Crothers's Thought Broker, and The Worm Turns, are so pertinaciously whimsical that the reader wearies a little of conceits so tenuous and long-drawn. It is a relief to turn to simple themes simply treated like The Unfailing Charm of Some Novels, and Angling in the Pool of Oblivion.

Mr. Crothers had the advantage of being a very cultivated man. He was familiar with the great highways of literature, and with the little-trodden paths of history. He had a particularly happy turn for quotation. Enlightened readers with a taste for idling in unfrequented spots cannot do better than linger a while by the shores of the Pool of Oblivion, and realize with Horace Walpole that "one of the bad effects of living in one's own time is that one never knows the truth about it until one is dead." This incursion into the streets of sixteenth-century London where there were still wells "sweet and wholesome, frequented by scholars and youths of the city on summer evenings"; into Hog Lane where milk "hot from the kine" was sold at three pints for a halfpenny; and into the ecclesiastical court where Latimer was being tried for heresy, is full of interest and small chance adventures.

The corresponding incursion into the realms of unfailingly charming novels is, on the whole, less animated, because Mr. Crothers, while keen in his appreciations, was occasionally obtuse in his criticisms. He saw with admirable distinctness that Trollope's characters labored under no constraint because they fitted perfectly into the atmosphere of good-natured worldliness which their creator had evolved for their benefit; but he failed to see that Mr. Sinclair Lewis's characters fit just as snugly into the atmosphere of "moral aridity" which is all that their creator has to give them. Gopher Prairie suits Dr. Will Kennicott as well as Barchester and Plumstead Episcopi suit Archdeacon Grantly. Mr. Lewis may treat the small town "as if it were a disease"; but Dr. Kennicott is as gallant

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a healer of disease as can be found in the pages of fiction, though his furnace fire is to him what the household gods were to the stately citizen of Rome. Even Babbit, now passed into a type, dreams of his fairy child; and Leora Arrowsmith contents herself "as automatically as a pussy cat" amid surroundings which would have driven Lily Dale to desperation.

The humor of Mr. Crothers's essays is gay and good-tempered. There is in it none of that undertone of sadness which lends charm to Mr. Edward Martin's lightest words, none of those swift intuitions which lay bare the springs of human action; but cheerfulness it has, and sense, and "an ineradicable prejudice in favor of intelligibility." It is a great thing to be able to understand what a modern writer is saying. It makes us feel intelligent.

AGNES REPPLIER.

Two Differing Essayists

Lambs in March and Other Essays, by Anne Bosworth Greene. New York: The Century Company. $2.50.

Portage, Wisconsin and Other Essays, by Zona Gale. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. $2.50.

LAMBS IN MARCH is a singularly refreshing volume. Through its delightful pages breathe the bracing winds of the great outdoors from which Mrs. Greene draws inspiration. The atmosphere of mere books, the smell of the lamp, the tricks of style that mark the "professional," are happily absent and one is conscious of being in the presence of that rarest and most stimulating of forces, a genuine personality.

Mrs. Greene's distinction does not lie in the absolute novelty of her experiences. Other women have spent a night in the Sierras, have camped under the summer stars in Vermont, have helped to tend sheep when their lambs were coming, and have owned a cat dowered with super-feline intelligence. Mrs. Greene's distinction lies in the fact that she has lent these experiences a new charm and freshness which owe much to an unhackneyed style, a zest for life outside four walls, and clear frank eyes that look on mountains, stars and all living things with swift understanding.

Like all rich personalities she finds no meagreness in life. Things that interest, stimulate, or thrill are ever ready at her hand. A dandelion growing amid Boston cobblestones stirs her imagination. A tub on a pier, tipped up to the stars and murmuring to the lap of the tide, lures to an adventure. The memory of her half-built bungalow in the dusk thrills her. "A glow of happiness came over me at thought of that house waiting on the dune, with all the wonderful nights to come in its keeping, the rich twilights, the stars, the dawns, the midnight beat and drift of storms." Best of all the essays perhaps are those that recount her adventures with animals: demure ponies, newly arrived lambs that stagger drunkenly about to the obvious distress of their mothers, and most appealing of all, the "Rabbit-Cat" that has personality-plus all his own and, though a pleb, deserves a place in the gallery of unforgettable felines with Agnes Repplier's patrician Agrippina.

Poles apart from Lambs in March, with its gusto and its unconscious grace of style, is Miss Gale's Portage, Wisconsin, which oversteps neither convention nor tradition and recalls us from the breezy world of which we seemed a part, to a library fireside with a window upon the village and the arm-chair of a spectator. The volume contains twelve essays which fall into two distinct groups. In the first Miss Gale tells us delightfully of the Wisconsin villages, Portage and Katytown, and of her father and Eliza Beers, her mother, whom she

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depicts with delicacy and charm. Portage is not a metropolis, but to those who love it and have homes there it has a poetry of its own. On the bank of the river that flows through it are lilacs and willows: "The current is lazy and preoccupied. . . . Beyond are hills, neatly buttonhole-stitched against a flat horizon, usually grey, sometimes violet, and on occasion ripe pink and yellow, like a cut peach." In this sketch Miss Gale's pen is that of the trained novelist, and under her spell Portage and its people are astir with life. Equally alive is Katytown in its crude but aspiring eighties, when the Chautauqua Literary and Scientific Circles were in their full flower and opened up to "adult yet virgin minds" their "treasuries of academic commonplace."

The remaining eight papers are academic in matter and treatment, and reveal Miss Gale in the rôle of inquirer and expositor, whose concern is with art in these callow United States, chiefly as it is involved in the novel. What handicap faces the American artist? she asks, and answers: "It is the lack in the national life of that indefinable control by the ordered, the accustomed, the mellow, the dreaming, the old." However, she does not despair. As the Pilgrims came "to express themselves in a life which had yet to be born," our generation is committed, in art, to a similar experiment and "quietly our art is arising." Miss Gale's outlook is modern and hopeful, and modernity and hopefulness characterize her attitude in Beauty and the Commonplace, Scholarship and the Spirit, The Novel and the Spirit, and The Novel of Tomorrow.

As a fiction writer of standing Miss Gale has stimulating and thought-provoking things to say on the American novel. She believes it has definitely broken with its Victorian forerunner and over this she feels no regret. But she is conscious of "a malady in contemporary fiction" which she names "the lack of power to express beauty," adding, "The novel which has not beauty has but one aspect of truth."

JOSEPH J. REILLY.

Dickens in Profile

Charles Dickens, by Ralph Straus. New York: Cosmopolitan Book Corporation. $4.00.

EXACTLY how not to stroke the public's back was demonstrated recently by an attempt to "write down" Dickens. This spectacle of a very little man making faces at a very big man reminded even non-erudite Dickensians of Uriah Heep peddling gossip about Mr. Micawber. It was an incredibly stupid performance, but it had the value of proving once and for all that reasonable folk refuse to believe that the creator of Mr. Pickwick and Tiny Tim can be turned over to the garbage collector. Since Dickens has such a grip on the universal heart new books regarding him are, however, welcome and inevitable.

Mr. Ralph Straus, who knows more than is customary about the reading and writing of books, has surveyed extant research on Dickens with an understanding eye. A great deal has been discovered and printed since John Forster completed his memorable narrative, so that any new biography must necessarily strive for accuracy of detail. While reckoning with this necessity Mr. Straus has managed, however, to compose a really organic story, written with so much agreeableness and sanity as to keep one always deeply interested. A fine chapter on Pickwick, adjudicating the major points of discussion which have been brought to bear upon that admirable philanthropist, follows the tale of the early Dickens, goaded by love to fan an ambition which flared suddenly into marvelous fame. This

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By

ERNEST T. DEWALD, Ph.D.

Associate Professor of Art and Archaeology in Princeton University

THIS manuscript, with over 300 miniatures, is one of the two earliest surviving illustrated Psalters, the other being the famous Psalter of Utrecht. The miniatures constitute the most varied and original illustration which was ever given the Book of Psalms, and reflect a strange symbolism that would be quite impossible to decipher without the explanatory commentary that accompanies each miniature. This first volume of Professor Dewald's work is a facsimile reproduction, with a colour-plate, of this extraordinary picture-book of early mediaeval iconography and liturgical practise. A second volume will trace the development of Psalter illustration in the early Middle Ages and treat the problems of the permanence of the manuscript and the sources of its style and symbolism.

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book puts no statue on a pedestal, but refrains likewise from every approach to slander. Though Dickens was during all his life "to take himself and his affairs with a solemnity not always accorded to the affairs of other people," he remained nevertheless "the jolliest, cheeriest companion, not in the least 'stuck up,' without unpleasant fads, fond of his glass, fonder of a good joke." Particularly admirable, it seems to me, is Mr. Straus's manner of dealing with the complicated and often most unhappy affairs of the Dickens household. He tells us that while having access to numerous "unpublished family letters," he resolved seldom to quote from them but to use information they contained wherever it would help to clear up problematical matters. The significance of the American journeys is fully appreciated, and every known light is focused upon them.

In short, this is the very "life" which the average reader of Dickens has been awaiting. Those who like to see literary criticism interwoven with biographical discussion will, of course, be disappointed; but our author tells them frankly that Chesterton and Gissing have furnished all the comment anyone can reasonably wish for. Because he has written a very human narrative about a human being, Mr. Straus performs the venerable literary function of "giving pleasure." This ought to be appreciated even by those who relish the savor of literary spice, especially when the topic is a great man. One is glad to call this new biography a good book, ably written and attractively published.

GEORGE N. SHUSTER.

Studies in Black and Scarlet

Scarlet Sister Mary, by Julia Peterkin. Indianapolis: The Bobbs Merrill Company.

Nigger to Nigger, by E. C. L. Adams. New York: Charles Scribners' Sons.

WHY does the rich fat of pathos cling more readily to the bones of the colored race than to any other of God's children? This dark truth, which only a class-room metaphysician would undertake to explain, is vitalized into a quick and unescapable reality by Julia Peterkin in Scarlet Sister Mary, her latest study of the Gullah Negro. Gullah is the nearest that modern American can come to pure black, and somehow the flamingo career of Sister Mary takes on a stronger dramatic coloring than most blonde-and-gold heroines can provide. Dealing with primitive colors, Mrs. Peterkin gets violent effects. No half-tones of emotion, no subtle understatement or pastel embroidery in this book. The scene in which Mary warms the death-chilled body of Unex, her eldest son, is as close to the raw maternal as any novelist dare come. In Scarlet Sister Mary, Julia Peterkin gives us a black Lilith—an unfortunate Lilith whose passionate clay contains more than a casual spark of the spirit; an exuberant black goddess contiguous to the earth in the elemental contacts of birth, love and death. We are made to feel, however, that Mary's heroic destiny is not wholly unapparent to Mary herself; she is playing a rôle that only a few women are permitted to play, and does it with the same cool self-appreciation observable in most tragic heroines from the Trojan Helen to Irene Forsyte. Scarlet Sister Mary is in the big tradition; she knows it, the author knows it, and after reading Mary's last refusal to give up her conjure rag, the reader knows it too.

A more humorous but no less valuable record of the Gullah state is offered by E. C. L. Adams in a volume of flashing dialogue or "compersations" entitled Nigger to Nigger. Doc-

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The unfinished manuscript of this novel was found among the effects of the late Canon Sheehan. Rev. H. M. Gaffney undertook the responsible task of editing and completing the work. Those who have caught the Canon's apostolic message in his other writings will not miss it in *Tristram Lloyd*. It is the story of a man who, loving his fellow-men, nevertheless, became a recluse. How he finally adapted himself to the realities of life is shown in a series of intensely dramatic situations. $2.50

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tor Adams, a physician of Columbia, South Carolina, has given ear to the swish of Gullah speech; he had bided his time, no doubt, around many a barber shop and cabin door in order to reproduce for the rest of us a delightfully clever collection of anecdotes, ballads, folk chants and "compersations." Happily, the latter predominate. The little colloquy between Tad and Scipio concerning the idiosyncrasies of Big Annie is worth a dozen sociological treatises. The Telephone Call, and A Bit of Correspondence are going to be bracketed with The Jumping Frog by this reviewer when he is struggling to recall examples of indigenous American humor. One could wish that Dr. Adams's sketches were lengthier and his eavesdroppings more frequent. Barring these glaring defects, Nigger to Nigger is the drollest opus of the current season.

HENRY MORTON ROBINSON.

An Actress Remembers

Keeping Off the Shelf, by Mrs. Thomas Whiffen. New York: E. P. Dutton and Company. $5.00.

MANY a pedestaled figure of the past comes vividly to life in Mrs. Whiffen's delightful autobiography. Dickens and his jealous wife, Oscar Wilde, Gilbert, Sullivan, Augustin Daly, Modjeska and many another shares the spotlight with the author. Nor are these luminaries the only ones to be remembered; Mrs. Whiffen never loses an opportunity to pay tribute to others nor to bestow generous praise on those with whom she worked.

Seldom has the theatre come more naturally by a daughter. Her mother was one of the three Pyne sisters, of whom Louisa attained the most fame as a singer and manageress. It was to this much admired aunt that young Blanche Galton confided her theatrical ambitions only to be severely snubbed. "You, an actress? Why, you wouldn't even say 'boo' to a goose!" was Aunt Louisa's discouraging reply. And so, though many an opportunity might have been opened to her through her famous aunt's influence, it was by becoming her sister's chaperon that Blanche stepped into her first part. Though Mrs. Whiffen was but eighteen months older than her personable and talented sister, Susan, she was considered safe as a chaperon "because I was the ugly duckling, and unlike the story, I never became a swan." Well, perhaps this beloved actress didn't become the proverbial swan, but she certainly grew into a most extraordinary duck. The promise of this young novice of the theatre was soon perceived. In a very short time she was not only playing her own part, but was singing the contralto rôle in an opera and acting the principal part in a farce; all this in one theatre for bills were considerably longer and more varied than they are now.

The one and only romance of Mrs. Whiffen's life was not long in coming. Mr. Thomas Whiffen was a well-known tenor, popular both in England and in America. As he numbered among his friends many prominent men, their wedding was quite a gala event; John Parry among others sang in the choir and Arthur Sullivan wrote a new anthem in honor of the occasion. This romance was a very satisfactory one, for though poverty sometimes threatened their stronghold, and more than one sorrow, such as the loss of their little daughter, came their way, their faith in each other was sufficient to give them strength in the face of adversity. And many a modern prince charming would find it difficult to measure up to mark were such proof of affection demanded as was demonstrated by Mr. Whiffen in his romantic exploit of crossing the Mississippi River by means of throwing a plank from floe to floe of ice.

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Indeed such a thing is almost inconceivable to us in this age of easy and rapid transit.

Early in her life Mrs. Whiffen resolved to live for her profession. Many times the climb seemed very hard, but she avers, "the view from the top was worth it, and now the way down-hill is smooth going!" Her main ambition is to go on to the end in this profession which she loves so much, for she would be a heartbroken old woman once she were laid away on the shelf.

There is something deeply inspirational about the life and achievement of a woman like Mrs. Whiffen. Never a complacent actress there is no danger of her becoming stale. That she was a successful wife and mother served to enrich her art, because upon every rôle she plays she brings to bear the knowledge and experience of a full and beautiful life.

Keeping Off the Shelf is a stimulating and refreshing book. There are, perhaps, sentimentalities here and there, but Mrs. Whiffen declares that she belongs to the mauve decade, and that she is proud of being a little old-fashioned. At any rate we are glad to have these memoirs. They tell so many charming things about their author of which she is quite unaware, besides giving us the details of many important and interesting events in her life, and recording the changes in the theatre and in public taste. Surely little more could be asked of a book.

DORIS CUNNINGHAM.

Moslem Womankind

The Turkish Ordeal, by Halidé Edib. New York: The Century Company. $4.00.

WHO, in 1918, would have prophesied the Turkish resurrection in 1922! Who would have announced that, instead of the dismemberment of the "dead man of Europe," toward which history has been so slowly moving but for which it was now surely at last ready, there should rise before the astonished world the vision of a Turkey reborn?

Once again incredulous nations were to witness the triumph of an unconquerable hope. As the world war ended, that hope for freedom and justice—that republican hope—was aflame in the hearts of a little straggling band of Turks, who were then, in reality, the new Turkey.

Two figures dominated that straggling group facing the ordeal, two figures who will for all time illumine each page of this chapter in Turkish history. One is the woman, Halidé Edib; the other is the man, Mustapha Kemal. In this book the woman is telling the story—telling it with her whole being. In it speaks her mind, prepared by a fine eastern heredity, rich in wisdom, far-visioned in philosophy; prepared, too, by an unusual western education—Halidé was professor of western literature in the University of Istamboul.

In it speaks her body, that body which had borne two sons, was bruised, almost vanquished, by malaria, tested to utter extremity, as she beat her way from Istamboul to the Nationalists' rallying-ground in Anatolia. As she passed from one earthen-floored room to the next. As she learned that the old régime had sentenced her to death. As she took on her work at headquarters, then in hospitals, and finally as a soldier in the fighting ranks.

In this book, her spirit, ever "au dessus de la melée," cries to the youth of all nations to tear aside the veil behind which peoples slew each other, and to recognize their likeness in the eyes of their brothers. It is a cry for brotherhood and peace.

Mind, body, spirit, write this narrative, every page of which is vivid as only the great artist (Halidé is a novelist of distinc-

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tion) could make them. Along a road of blood and hideous suffering turned to beauty by faith and sacrifice, she leads us. All is pictured with cinema-like vividness. Lands, villages, houses, are sun-drenched, moon-drenched. Dogs, horses, people, are painted with idiosyncratic precision. Good and evil are weighed, balanced. We have the impression of an appraisal unimpeded, swift, direct; of an understanding born of wisdom and charity.

Always we have this impression, except as she faces her opposite, the hero of the revolution. With him, too, she would be just. But when she talks of Mustapha Kemal, she is no longer "au dessus de la melée." There, the eneveloping atmosphere of this remarkable book breaks. For to Halidé, Kemal, whose leadership won the final victory, emerged from the ordeal as the betrayer of the republican hope. With what bitterness she finishes, stroke on stroke, the portrait of the Grey Man! Because of this betrayal she lives in self-inflicted exile in England.

One feels that the story cannot end here, that there must be a rapprochement—some common ground again won—on which the man and the woman who held and led the straggling band until the new Turkey living in them was a demonstrated fact, may, again, work side by side. As Halidé herself says in this book, "The battle of freedom is never done, and the field never quiet."

CHARLOTTE KELLOGG.

The Calvert Series

The Catholic Church and the Home, by James M. Gillis, C.S.P. The Catholic Church and the Bible, by Hugh Pope, O.P. New York: The Macmillan Company. $1.00 each.

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Briefer Mention

Greater Perfection, by Sister Miriam Teresa. New York: P. J. Kenedy and Sons. $2.00.

SISTER MIRIAM TERESA, of the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth, devoted her short life to striving after perfection. She was also a woman of culture and was requested by a spiritual director to write a number of conferences for religious. These have now been collected and introduced to the Catholic world by Monsignor Thomas H. McLaughlin. One finds in them an admirable sincerity of thought and expression. The tedious pious ejaculations of so many modern devotional writers, who seem forever determined to copy the style of Guido Reni, are absent; and in their stead we have fresh and hopeful actuality. Not all the conferences are of equal value, but the best of them will descend upon listeners to spiritual reading with an impressive douceur comparable with the fall of manna after a sojourn in the desert. Sister Miriam confronted all the problems of the religious life so realistically that her book will also serve to give people in the world a glimpse of the convent purpose.

Infidelity, by Arthur Weigall. New York: Brentano's. $2.50.

ONE of the most popular plots in our current magazines is that in which a young married couple must, because of some exigency, deny their relationship; and occasionally the situation is reversed and we are given, for novelty, the unmarried pair who must pass as man and wife. Mr. Weigall has combined both situations, made of them an entertaining farce, added his opinions of English marriage laws and stretched the result to novel length. The wife of a young writer on the Riviera has an aunt who has forbidden her to marry if she cares to inherit any of several millions; the proud husband's father is a staid churchman who would cut his son off without a ha'penny if there were any irregularity. Father and aunt pay an unexpected visit, and some amusing entanglements result, though the plot is too tenuous to justify 320 pages.

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